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Contents

The Week 113

Editorials

U. S. A. versus U. S. S. R. 116
Neutrality and Oil 117

General Articles

Mussolini Goes to War ..... H. N. Brailsford 119
Soaking the Poor ..... Dayton D. McKean 121
Feud (verse) ..... Theodore Roethke 123
The Plight of the Patient ..... Paul Archer 124
Science and the Government ..... Harold Ward 126
The North (verse) ..... Stephen Spender 127
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 128
Other People's Money ..... John T. Flynn 129
On the Labor Front ..... William P. Mangold 130

Correspondence 131

Ellen Glasgow's New Book ..... Stark Young 133

Books in Review

Class Enemy ..... Malcolm Cowley 134
Clarence Day ..... Philip Littell 135
A Garland of Posies ..... Max Lerner 136
The Two Inch Shelf of Books ..... R. P. Blackmur 137
Mantic Almageste ..... Murray Godwin 137
Sweet Story ..... Newton Arvin 138
Novels in Brief 139

The Week

ON THE eve of the League Council meeting to deal with the Italo-Ethiopian dispute came the dramatic announcement of a concession granted by Emperor Haile Selassie covering half of his entire country. The concession was at first reported to have been made jointly to British and American interests. Acting on this assumption, the British government prepared, but then postponed, a note to Haile Selassie protesting that the concession violated the treaty of 1906 (to which Ethiopia was not a party). In Paris and Rome it was promptly commented that if English interests were involved in the concession, Great Britain obviously could not come into court wtih clean hands and that her influence in the Geneva meeting would be greatly diminished. After forty-eight hours of this, Emperor Haile Selassie set off another bomb by declaring that the concessionaires are exclusively Americans, representing the Standard Oil Company. The mystery deepened, however, as one after another the heads of all the Standard Oil Companies and their subsidiaries denied knowing anything about the matter. American oil geologists who have made an exhaustive study of the Ethiopian resources insist that oil is not present in commercial quantities. In Washington, government officials emphasized the fact that if Americans get involved in Ethiopian affairs the United States will go no farther in their behalf than to make diplomatic protest if they receive unequal treatment as compared with nationals of other powers. How far this would be successful in preventing actual entanglement of the United States in the impending war remains to be seen.

ASIDE from the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, the outstanding event of the week in the international field was the continued debate between the United States and Soviet Russia on the question of Communist propaganda in this country. To the American note the Russians made a reply equally sharp in tone. They insist that no commitment they have ever undertaken was intended to muzzle the activities of the Third International. Since the United States had threatened "most serious consequences" if the Russians did not comply with its wishes, this answer left Washington in a dilemma. Its solution was to prepare, not another note to the U.S.S.R. but an official statement by Secretary Hull which virtually reiterated the contents of the note of August 25. In Germany, the Catholic Church is apparently getting ready for wholesale defiance of the Nazi regime, beginning with instructions to the clergy "to obey the laws of God, not of man." Dr. Schacht, with what seems to the outside world to be reckless audacity, has again defied the Nazi hierarchy, by intervening on behalf of a minor official of the Reichsbank who had been sent to prison for evicting a tenant from an apartment house of which he was the manager. As an anti-Semitic paper in Germany proposed compulsory sterilization of all Jews who are unwilling to leave the country, plans were set on foot to exclude them from the book trade and from dealing in art objects. In Italy, Senator Marconi revealed an invention by which he hopes to stop airplanes in flight—a promise that even Marconi's distinguished record has not prevented the world from receiving with incredulity. With the problem of refugees from Germany, and particularly the Saar, growing more serious, the United States government has announced, as might have been anticipated, that our immigration law will pre-

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vent our receiving more than the extremely limited proportion of these refugees who are able to comply fully with its provisions.

WITH all the important bills passed at the last session signed, and with the President taking a brief rest at Hyde Park before his Western tour, the United States has enjoyed a respite from the feverish activity of a fortnight ago. Perhaps the week's chief political news was Mr. Hearst's long anticipated break with the President; the Sage of San Simeon now wants Al Smith to run independently as head of a new "Constitutional Democratic" party. Nationwide criticism of Huey Long's filibuster that prevented passage of the ninety-three-million-dollar-deficiency appropriation has brought the customary talk about curbing the right of unlimited free speech in the Senate—talk which, it is safe to predict, will as usual come to nothing. For the first time in many years, a federal security issue was undersubscribed, and bankers charged that this resulted from Secretary Morgenthau's policy of selling new issues by public auction. As James A. Moffett, head of the Federal Housing Administration, resigned his post, reports became more insistent that Postmaster General Farley would leave the Cabinet to give his whole time to the Democratic National Committee—something he should have done long ago. The federal government having dropped its income-tax proceedings against Jimmie Walker, that gentleman has announced his intention of coming home; and promptly there were reports that he might again seek political office in New York City. It is hard to believe that the voters of the metropolis, after all that has happened, would ever again entrust to Jimmie Walker even the responsibility of being dog-catcher; but Tammany long ago proved that New York voters learn practically nothing by experience and that anything can happen in the Big Town.

HUEY LONG'S fortunes are again at a low ebb; but he has come back before and there is no reason to suppose he cannot do it again. Huey made a bad blunder when by his filibuster he prevented passage of the third deficiency appropriation, carrying $93,000,000 to finance the operations of the Social Security Law and many other measures. Mr. Roosevelt now announces he has been unable to find these funds anywhere else, and that federal aid for the aged and for crippled and dependent children must wait until Congress reassembles in January. Huey made matters worse for himself by issuing a statement in which he charged that it was really Mr. Roosevelt who had filibustered the deficiency bill to death. The Kingfish is also damaged by a House resolution passed in the closing hours of Congress, which permits the Committee on Elections to go to Louisiana and watch every detail of the voting in next year's primaries. It will be odd indeed if the committee, bitterly hostile to Long, does not find a great many gross irregularities in the balloting. A few weeks ago, political observer were saying that by running independently fo President, Huey could take away sufficient vote from Mr. Roosevelt to ensure the election of th Republican candidate. Today, the area where th Kingfish is all-powerful does not loom so large.

THE recent overwhelming victory of the Socia Credit party in Alberta Province lends added in terest to the general election coming in Canada o October 14. That the present Conservative govern ment of Mr. Bennett will be defeated seems certain already, the Liberals control eight of the nine prov inces, and it is generally assumed that they will wi by a large majority. Two other parties are in th field—the Reconstructionists, headed by Harry Ste vens, formerly a member of the Bennett Cabinet and the Coöperative Commonwealth Federation whose greatest strength is in the agrarian West an whose platform is substantially a Socialist one Canada, it would seem, is just ending her Hoove period and is about to enter a Rooseveltian era Mr. Mackenzie King, the leader of the Liberals, i demanding national unemployment insurance, a huge program of public works including forestry and road-building, a state-owned central bank an sharp reduction of tariffs, particularly within th British Commonwealth of Nations. For our read ers, perhaps the most interesting development is th rapid growth of the C.C.F., which is already, afte only two years, the official opposition in two western provinces. The leaders of this group confidently expect from thirty-five to fifty seats in the new national parliament. An analogous situation in the United States would mean seventy to a hundred members in the House of Representatives from groups like the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota or the La Follette group in Wisconsin, except that the C.C.F. is still farther to the left.

IN ITS issue of August 10, News-Week magazine published a summary of the revelations made in Washington concerning the Associated Gas and Electric System and its chief representative, Mr. H. C. Hopson. Promptly it received boiling letters of indignation against its treatment of the story from two gentlemen, Mr. J. H. Shinn, of Brooklyn, New York, and Mr. H. C. Hasbrouck, of Montclair, New Jersey. Both these letters are printed in News-Week for August 24, with comment by the editors that they were the only communications of this character received up to the time the August 24 issue went to press. The editors add:

> Since receipt of the foregoing letters, there was placed in the record of the Senate Lobby Investigating Committee a telegram which Howard C. Hopson, head of Associated Gas and Electric, sent to his home office while traveling last March. One paragraph reads: "Someone, either Shinn or Hasbrouck, should be put in possession of facts and should write a letter to The New York Times protesting against unfairness of editorial . . ."

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We do not assume, of course, that the Shinn and Hasbrouck whom Mr. Hopson told to write to The New York Times in March are the same Shinn and Hasbrouck who are found writing to News-Week, in August, protesting against an article every statement in which was taken from the public records. We assume, on the contrary, that they are two other fellows, and marvel at the wonders of coincidence.

AN INTERESTING question of veracity has risen between the American Civil Liberties Union and radio station WLW of Cincinnati, Ohio. The A.C.L.U. charges that Station WLW is suppressing news in its broadcasts and offers in evidence photostatic copies of orders issued by the station to its employees. One of these says that "no reference to strikes is to be made on any news broadcasts over this station." Another issued a few days later says: "Our news broadcasts, as you have already been told, and which has been our practice for some time, will not include mention of any strikes. This also includes students' strikes and school walkouts." In response to a telegram of inquiry from The New Republic, John L. Clark, of Station WLW, replied: "Emphatically deny operating policy suppressing all strike news as inquired about in your telegram today. Any report to the contrary you may have received is ridiculous in face of actual strike news, etc., included in news broadcasts, numerous dates of which can easily be given. One and only editorial policy is to broadcast news of national and international importance and to broadcast all of it." Mr. Clark, however, does not explain the photostatic copies of the orders on WLW letterheads, in the possession of the A.C.L.U. Perhaps the Federal Communications Commission will clear up the mystery, since it is responsible for radio stations' being operated with proper attention to the public interest.

IN Liberty Magazine for September 7 appears an extraordinary article signed by "J. G. Shaw," entitled "Will the Communists Get Our Girls in College?" The article makes a series of wild charges, ridiculously false to anyone acquainted with the facts, regarding radicalism among college students. In The New Masses for September 3 appears an article entitled "My Father Is a Liar!" by Nancy Bedford-Jones. Miss Bedford-Jones claims to have indisputable evidence that the article is the work of her father, Henry Bedford-Jones, reported to be a well known writer of popular fiction. She lists a series of misstatements in the article, and further falsehoods in it also have been pointed out by Joseph P. Lash, National Secretary of the Student League for Industrial Democracy and by Norman Thomas, Executive Director of the League for Industrial Democracy, its parent body.

THE article purports to quote the experiences of several gentlemen whose undergraduate daughters have turned Communist (Mr. Bedford-Jones, like most other Red-baiters, seems unable to tell the difference between a Socialist and a Communist). His daughter, in her article, says that none of these other fathers exists and that Mr. Bedford-Jones has in all cases used grossly falsified accounts of her own experiences. Aside from the fact that the Liberty article registers a new low in scandal-mongering of this sort, the chief point of interest about it is why Mr. Bernarr Macfadden, the publisher of Liberty, should have wished to put into his pages such an extraordinary attack. Perhaps a clue is to be found in an article by Mr. Macfadden himself, which Mr. Bedford-Jones quotes with approval. "There is a chance," says Mr. Macfadden, "for serious strikes to be ominous in size and strength. Right in the midst there is usually a Communist leader ready to do everything possible to promote lawlessness and disorder." Exactly. Build up anti-radical sentiment by publishing articles like that of Mr. Bedford-Jones, and then help to smash strikes by allegations of Communism against the leaders.

> The Commanding General of the Tenth Army cites in the order of the day the soldier Barbusse (Henri) of the Twenty-second Company, Thirty-first Regiment of Infantry, as a man of superior moral value. He enlisted voluntarily for the duration of the War; he refused to be put into the territorial reserves in spite of his age and the state of his health. He offered himself always for all dangerous missions.

THESE words from a French army order might stand as his epitaph. The soldier Henri Barbusse was a man of superior moral value who refused to be furloughed or discharged, and he fought his bravest battles after the War, when he was opposing the profiteers and the war-makers. By that time he was only the bullet-scarred shell of a man, his lungs half gone, his skin drawn tight over the skull, his flesh almost burned away by the fire of his purpose. The doctors kept warning him that every new task or journey would be his last. Still, he continued to travel over Europe and America, writing, editing magazines and delivering some of the most eloquent speeches since Karl Liebknecht and Jean Jaurès. "He offered himself always for all dangerous missions," and at the same time he did enough routine organizational work to have killed three younger men. He took a principal part in founding the Republican Association of Former Soldiers, which kept the French veterans from being used as fascist shock troops; he issued the call for the World Congress Against War. Less directly, but by force of argument and example, he helped to bring together the People's Front, an alliance of French middle-class and working-class parties that is the strongest existing barrier against fascism. Always he served as a liaison officer—between the literary generation of 1890 and that of 1930, between writers and factory workers, between liberals and Communists, even between Communists and Christians (as in his fine and neglected life of Jesus). His strictly literary influence was never great, but he had and deserved to have a tremen-

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dous moral prestige. People knew that he never spared himself or asked to be excused from a thankless job that had to be done. To the end, Barbusse was a good soldier.

THE radio is about to acquire a competitor in the United States, and one that may have a serious effect upon its business. Several years ago, a device was perfected through which it is possible to bring into the home by means of telephone or electric-light wires all the sorts of material now broadcast. Commercial use of this system was held in abeyance because of the depression, but its sponsors have now decided that the time has come to launch their enterprise and it will soon appear in several American cities. For monthly fees ranging from $1.50 to $4.50, it will be possible to get "radio" programs entirely free of advertising, continuously from seven o'clock each morning until one o'clock the following morning. The fee of $1.50 is for ordinary home reception; those who pay a larger sum will receive the same programs to be heard through loudspeakers in restaurants, hotel lobbies, etc.

AT THE beginning, three "channels" will be available and the listener can choose among them by turning a switch. One of these will carry popular music, including dance tunes played by the country's leading bands. Most of this material, and that on the other channels, will come from phonograph records of a quality, we are promised, higher than anything now commercially available. A second channel will carry music more serious in character, though the astute gentlemen behind this enterprise will be careful not to go over the heads of their audience. On still another channel will be broadcast the latest news, at frequent intervals all day long, lectures, addresses and other informative material. In addition to the fee mentioned above, the listener must of course pay the cost of the electric current necessary to operate the device.

IT IS expected that the chief clients at first will be restaurants and other places of public entertainment. As everyone knows, many of these are now equipped with radio sets for the entertainment of their guests, but face the difficulty that nearly every station interrupts practically all its programs with advertising ballyhoo which many people find offensive. Under the new plan, and by means of a loudspeaker, any restaurant or hotel can furnish its guests musical programs of high quality, unmarred by advertising or any other interruption whatever, except perhaps the voice of an announcer giving the name of the selection next to be heard. The device, incidentally, may create a new problem of technological unemployment for musicians in hotel and restaurant orchestras whose services will no longer be required. It will be interesting to see whether any important market is developed for the device in the home. Everyone knows that many people object to advertising on the radio. Will these individuals be willing to pay $18 a year for the privilege of choosing among three programs of superior quality, none of which contains any advertising whatever? The sponsors for the new device believe that such a market exists and is very large. It is perhaps worth noting that in England advertising is not permitted on the radio and millions of people there pay an annual fee of $2.50 for the privilege of operating a receiving set. If the clients of "Wired Radio" in the United States become sufficiently numerous, they may exert a salutary effect upon the quality of broadcasting.

U.S.A. versus U.S.S.R.

THE SUDDEN cooling of relations between the United States and Soviet Russia is one of those historical accidents that have a seriousness out of all relation to their intrinsic importance. Nothing has happened that in fact justified the extraordinarily sharp note of the United States government. The Russians, either inside the government or out of it, have changed neither the character nor the quantity of their activities during the last three or six months in any direction to which the United States could legitimately object. In so far as the recent meeting of the Third International differed from previous ones, it was entirely in ways that ought to meet the unalloyed approval of President Roosevelt and his advisers.

For many years, American Communists have been going to Russia and uttering fantastic boasts of their importance in the United States and the imminence of revolution here. Fifteen years ago, the Russians were indeed bent on world revolution, and spent a good deal of time and money seeking to foment the spread of communism in many other countries. Today, the policy of the U.S.S.R. is completely changed. Although the ideal of a worldwide Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has not been abandoned, it has certainly been deferred. The whole attention of the Russian government is directed to carrying out the aims of the revolution at home and preventing war with either of Soviet Russia's powerful potential enemies, Germany and Japan. For this purpose, Russia has effected an alliance with France, at present in many ways the most conservative country in Europe, and is tacitly supporting her policy of vigorous increase in armament, a policy that ten years ago would have been ridiculed or denounced at Moscow.

The meeting of the Third International to which the American government objects was by far the most moderate and conciliatory session of that body ever held. The Communists now recognize the terrible mistake made by themselves, the Socialists and Liberals, particularly in Germany, in quarreling with one another for many years and failing to present a united front against the menace of fascism. They now propose to rectify that error if they can. They will coöperate to the greatest possible extent

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with all Left groups and parties everywhere against the worldwide and growing danger of fascist dictatorships. Those parts of their own program which are most obnoxious to certain Leftist groups, such as the anti-religious campaign, will be laid on the shelf for the time being. To be sure, the Communists make the reservation that after the fascist menace has been conquered, they will drive on toward their own goal with all possible vigor. What else does anyone expect them to say? The point is that they now offer a conciliatory, a pragmatic and opportunist program. Perhaps the offer comes too late, perhaps the stereotypes of misunderstanding and hatred between Communist and Socialist, Socialist and Progressive, are too deeply graven on men's hearts to be removed in a single generation. But the only way to find this out is to try. If the effort fails, the anti-fascist forces will be no worse off than they will be if through defeatism they refuse even to make the attempt.

The action of the American government in protesting the meeting of the Third International was characterized by the same abruptness and intransigence that marked the President's message sounding the death knell of the London Economic Conference. The language used strongly suggests that the American note was intended primarily for domestic consumption, to placate Hearst, the A. F. of L. and other bitterly anti-Russian groups at home. It has been suggested, and not without plausibility, that Mr. Roosevelt wished to offset the possible political damage done by Dimitroff's perfectly true statement that the real fomenters of fascism in this country are not the President and his advisers but the last-ditch Tory capitalists who still oppose his program. One can imagine what the Republicans could do with the statement that "even the Communists in Moscow" approve of the New Deal. Disappointment over the breakdown of negotiations regarding the so-called Russian debt and the failure of the Russians to buy vast quantities of goods in the United States were other factors, probably, in Mr. Roosevelt's decision.

The question whether the Russian government has in fact violated the pledge given by Litvinov at the time diplomatic relations were resumed seems to us of minor importance compared with the other issues involved. The American government says flatly that Moscow undertook to prevent all activities on its soil looking toward communism in the United States and the text of the Litvinov letter is certainly about as sweeping as it well could be. Now, however, the Russian government insists that its promise did not cover activities of the Third International, which officially has no relation with the government of the U.S.S.R. No one in his senses should ever have supposed that as a result of American recognition the Soviet government would prevent native American Communists from coming to Moscow and there reporting, even in an excessively optimistic spirit, activities of the native American Communist Party. The United States undertook, reciprocally, all the engagements entered into by the Russians; yet no one can deny that this country has been and is a hotbed of hostile propaganda whose general aim is the overthrow of the present Russian government and the forestalling of any similar government anywhere in the world.

One important reason for regretting the new coolness between these two nations is that the President's action gives aid and comfort to the professional patriots, the Red-baiters, vigilantes and American fascists. These groups will use Mr. Roosevelt's new position as an excuse for redoubling their activity, for beating up leaders of strikes on the real or pretended ground of radicalism, for seeking to terrorize exponents of the old American principle of free speech. They are not only the enemies of every spokesman for the under dog; they are the enemies of the President and everything he stands for. He may find cause bitterly to repent giving them fresh ammunition.

Another powerful reason for regretting the new development is the world situation. Of all the great nations, the United States and Soviet Russia are the two most unequivocally devoted to peace, with the smallest entanglements in the network of imperialistic interests that is slowly throttling Western Europe. The rupture of relations between U.S. and U.S.S.R. would give Japan a freer hand in the Orient, Hitler a freer hand in his pursuit of Pan-Germanism. In a world trembling on the brink of the abyss, it is tragic that the two most powerful nations and the two whose interests are most nearly identical should quarrel without reason.

Neutrality and Oil

PRESIDENT Roosevelt last week signed the neutrality measure designed to help keep the United States out of war. The same newspapers that reported this fact also carried banner headlines saying that powerful American oil interests were concerned in the vast concession granted by Emperor Haile Selassie for the obvious purpose of checkmating the Italians. How much reality is there to our policy of trying to remain neutral? Is it likely to be dissolved in the oil bath it has so suddenly and unexpectedly received? For light on these questions it may be desirable to recall a little of the history of the new legislation.

Three weeks ago, following a great uprush of pacifist feeling, Congress adopted legislation designed to preserve this country's neutrality under all circumstances. Because the approaching end of Congress gave little time for drafting, the laws were written to last only until February, when it was understood they would be perfected and strengthened. Although the laws were temporary, the intent of Congress was clear and explicit. It was that this country would never again defend financial and commercial interests abroad that would lead us into war.

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In the few days since the adjournment of Congress, Mr. Roosevelt's adherence to this new policy of the country has become doubtful. Stories have come from Washington categorically saying that Mr. Roosevelt has informed Democratic leaders of Congress that he will not accept limitations upon his right to decide what American interests abroad are to be defended in wartime, and will not even consent to having the present prohibition against munitions shipments made permanent. These stories have not been denied from Hyde Park, and apparently represent Mr. Roosevelt's position accurately. This week the State Department unofficially has let it be known that war materials, as distinguished from finished munitions, will not be affected by the existing temporary legislation. It is reported that Italy is now buying American machine tools for the manufacture of shells, trucks and airplane engines, together with scrap iron, cotton and many other raw materials. Under the State Department's projected ruling, such shipments as these would be considered legitimate commerce, and if they were seized on the high seas as contraband, the State Department apparently would be prepared to protest.

In recent press conferences, Mr. Roosevelt has suggested that anxiety about American neutrality was unwarranted. He has taken the attitude that there is no immediate danger of a general European war, and other official sources have pointed out that, in the case of the approaching Italo-Ethiopian conflict, Italy has neither the money nor the need to buy munitions here on a large scale. When the astonishing news of the Rickett oil concession, covering a half of Ethiopia, became known over the week-end, the State Department hastened to declare that it had done nothing to aid Mr. Rickett, had not known of his negotiations with Haile Selassie and would not give diplomatic support to the mysterious owners of the concession.

Despite these comforting words, no realistic observer can believe that our neutrality is in any degree more secure than it was before Congress acted. We are in fact selling materials of war to Italy, though at the present moment only in small quantities. It is true that a general European war is not likely in the next few months, but no man can guarantee that it will not come. If it should come, American munitions makers would have the right to continue the sales to the belligerents of everything except finished guns and shells. Some of these shipments would unquestionably be seized, and this country would at once be involved in a series of incidents similar to those that preceded our entry into the World War.

But even if the munitions makers do not involve us in trouble, our neutrality is directly threatened by the Rickett concession. Rickett himself is a well known promoter, who occupies a relatively important place in the world oil industry. It is reasonable to assume that at least one of the great oil groups is behind him. While Secretary Hull's statement that he will do nothing to promote the interests of Rickett and his backers is undoubtedly sincere, that does not mean that we are not in any degree entangled in the Ethiopian conflict. Mr. Hull may forbid American diplomatic representatives in Europe to refrain from taking an active part in the present imperialistic plans for Ethiopia's dismemberment, but if it develops that Rickett has behind him a substantial amount of American capital, he will be bound to defend the interests of the concession owner under the State Department's traditional policies, in which the only change has been the renunciation of armed intervention, formerly applied in Latin America, and unimportant in cases like the present one. In the western part of Ethiopia, there is a concession held by the J. G. White Company of New York City for the building of the Lake Tsana dam, and the White company is highly approved by the State Department and has received constant support from it. If the Department were to refuse to protect the Rickett concession, it would destroy its ability to aid the White interests or those of any other American concern. It is obvious that Mr. Hull has no intention of making any such drastic—and necessary—change in American policy.

The administration's statements about the Rickett concession must be read with this in mind. It is all very well for the administration to say now, while Rickett's concession is surrounded with mystery, that we remain without entanglement in the Ethiopian situation, but if it turns out that important, respecable American interests are involved—or more probably, international interests with strong American banking connections—and if the holders of the concessions appeal to the State Department for the same diplomatic aid that this country is giving other groups the world over, it will either have to respond or revolutionize its present policies. Every utterance of the administration shows that Mr. Roosevelt does not contemplate doing this. His desire to keep peace is beyond question, but he has given no sign that he is prepared to advocate that this country pay the necessary price even by stopping the sale of war materials, much less by the surrender of our vast interests on every continent.

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Mussolini Goes to War

GEOGRAPHERS had not prepared us for the discovery of recent months that Ethiopia is the hub of the universe, and Addis Ababa the center of gravity of the European continent. This fact the governments of London and Paris are now facing, since their efforts to bring Mussolini to a compromise hopelessly failed. Those futile conferences in Paris finally established two facts: that Mussolini is bent on war for war's sake, and that nothing less than complete and permanent mastery over Ethiopia will content him.

The two Western Powers could and would have got for him, cheaply and without war, nearly all the concrete gains that victory might bring—railway and mining concessions, a policed frontier, the appointment of foreign advisers and officers, mainly Italians—even a zone for Italian colonization. How much of Ethiopian independence would have survived this system of Italian exploitation veiled under the League's tutelage, one need not now inquire. It did not promise what Mussolini wants—a theatrical act of self-assertion, the excitement of an easy triumph, the wiping out of the memory of the defeat at Adowa, the translation into realized fact of the Fascist rhetoric about the revival of the Roman Empire.

The folly of this attitude seems nearly incredible, given the precarious condition of Italy's finances, and one asks whether this dictator, who had hitherto managed to combine restraint in action with extravagance in speech, is now the victim of a barely sane megalomania. Conceivably a threat of effective Anglo-French action, quietly but firmly addressed to his private ear, might have stopped him last December. But to public threats at this phase of his enterprise, he cannot now yield without a humiliation that would shake, and might upset, the dictatorship itself.

London and Paris must now face the most anxious and complicated problem that European affairs have presented since 1914. At a first glance it seems easier than the Manchurian affair. Together, if they choose to invoke the League Covenant, Britain and France have the physical power to stop this enterprise with ease. They have only to close the Suez Canal: any mad acts of retaliation to which Italy might resort in Malta or Egypt would only give occasion for a display of their overwhelming naval preponderance. To do this, however, or even to threaten it, would have consequences fatal to the European system as it exists today. In the first place, it might upset Mussolini himself, if he bent passively under this coercion. If he were to fall, it is probable that sooner or later a radical regime, under combined socialist and communist leadership, would follow him. That would terrify the propertied classes in England and France, for they would dread, with some reason, the spread to Austria and the whole Danubian region of any revolutionary movement that started in Italy. Nor would Moscow in its present state of mind welcome this prospect more cordially than London or Paris.

In the second place, one may predict with even less hesitation that any attempt to check Mussolini, whether by the mild method of economic sanctions or by naval action, must drive him out of the Versailles camp, and fling him into the embrace of Hitler. Nothing stands in the way of their union, save Mussolini's ambition to enjoy a not very profitable overlordship in Austria. If they could come to terms over this, whether by a condominium or a partition, the way is open to the creation of a formidable league of the dissatisfied powers. These two, with Poland, Austria and Hungary, would form a compact central block. By diplomatic pressure, by demagogic agitation and intrigue, it might, while Germany steadily increased her military power, gain some of its ends. In the last resort, with the accession of Japan, it might eventually risk a new world war of the ambitious against the sated empires. One may attribute to this rearrangement of the balance of power in the Old World a short-range or a long-range effect. In either event, it shatters the calculations on which the French, the Russians and the Czechs have built their conception of safety for Europe and themselves. It breaks the ring around Germany.

Why, then, should the Western Powers take it upon themselves to interfere with the Italian enterprise? The scientific slaughter of the inoffensive inhabitants of this African kingdom will be a distressing spectacle, but whatever sympathy one may feel for the Ethiopians, one cannot argue that this curious medieval nation has made any contribution to the common good of humanity. It will hurt liberals to face the fact, once for all, that the League is an unworkable sham: the rest of us have suspected as much since it allowed the Poles to snatch Vilna, and known it since the Manchurian affair.

There was a case for putting friendly pressure on Italy, and for offering such compromises as in fact M. Laval and Mr. Eden did offer. London and Paris are far from sharing Mussolini's estimate of his own military and economic strength. Doubtless his airplanes, his poison gas and his tanks will enable him to win spectacular successes in the early months of this campaign. To crush the Ethiopians, if they are foolish enough to risk massed action, will be easy; but to proceed from victory to the occupation and administration of this

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almost roadless country of alps and deserts will be excessively difficult, when the rains set in again, if the Ethiopians develop a talent for guerilla warfare. Few believe that either the morale or the finances of Italy can survive a protracted campaign. In that event the balance of power in Europe and possibly the Italian dictatorship itself will be subjected to terrific shocks. All this one may point out in friendly language to Mussolini (as the French and the British did), but if one fails to convince him, must one bring on oneself the very dangers one dreads by going beyond persuasion to coercion?

This was and probably still is the average view of the British Tory majority. It would do much to prevent this war, but for coercion it is not yet ready. It has, moreover, other reasons that are rarely, if ever, set out in print. The French, as everyone knows, are even less disposed to put unfriendly pressure on Mussolini. They have concluded with him what is virtually a military alliance, and the two army staffs are working out a joint plan of campaign for the defense of Austria against any German attempt to absorb it. If now, to oblige London, France were to throw over this Italian alliance, what have the British to offer in its place? Will they bind themselves to active intervention to maintain the so-called "independence" of Austria? Will they come wholeheartedly shoulder to shoulder with Russia into the ring that encircles Germany?

As yet the British government is not prepared to give any commitments of this kind. It has stubbornly refused to promise action in the event of an Austrian crisis. It hopes, as the naval agreement proved, for a rapprochement with Germany, which might advance rapidly if Hitler would but moderate his persecution of the churches and the Jews. It is not eager to be drawn into an alliance with the Soviet Union. In short, it will not pay, or it is reluctant to pay, the price that might induce the French to join it in coercing the Italians.

There are, however, motives that work in London toward a positive policy. The first and strongest of them is imperialistic. When in 1906 the British joined the French in signing with Italy the treaty that recognized the claim of that country to a sphere of economic interest covering the greater part of Abyssinia, they did not foresee the rampant and unfriendly power that faces them today. The Italy of those days had a becoming respect for British sea power; it could even be patronized; it would have been a friendly and accommodating neighbor. The Treaty of 1906 certainly contemplated an eventual partition of Abyssinia, but it most explicitly forbade any of the three powers to act without the express consent of the other two. In the interval the Sudan and Kenya have become fields of investment that the British governing class values highly. Downing Street might have helped a modest, friendly Italy to aggrandize herself at Ethiopia's expense. But to tolerate unilateral action by this hostile and headstrong power is a wholly different matter. Who knows what would happen, around Lake Tsana, to the waters on which the wealth of Egypt and the Sudan depend? It is one thing to smile on Italian railways and mines, and quite another to contemplate the establishment of a great Italian military power. For Italy could conquer and hold these warlike mountaineers only by creating here a formidable military and aerial base, which would dominate Egypt and threaten the British road to India. It weighs also with Downing Street that a new racial solidarity has been awakened among the peoples of Africa by Italy's challenge; white men all over the continent will find life a little harder than before, when this war begins.

Finally, even for the British Tory government, and still more for the French, the League has a certain political value. It can be used, and in fact always has been used, to give to the actual *status quo* a moral and legal sanctity. All liberals and most Socialists regard it with superstitious veneration. Even the Communists have now rallied to it. If ever it is necessary in England and France to call the workers into another war against Germany, a reference to the sublime abstraction in Geneva will suffice to answer the argument that this is but another imperialist struggle to maintain the gains won at Versailles. Wise conservatives understand the uses of this League. With it to back them, the sated empires can rally the masses against the hungry powers. In England an election is approaching, and whether it comes in November or (more probably) in January, the National Government will have to meet the charges of the Labor Party that it sabotaged the League, first in the Manchurian affair, and then in the Disarmament Conference. It cannot risk the accusation that it finally smashed the League by preventing action in this Ethiopian affair. At least it must seem to remember the Covenant: at least it must try to put the machinery of sanctions in motion. If it fails, it must be able to throw the blame upon the French. But the French government in its turn is subject to pressure. It too faces an election, and a very difficult one, in May. The French parties of the left, the Czechs and even the Russians dislike the crude old-world realism of a naked military alliance against Germany. Less prone to moral illusions than the British public, they too prefer the legal mechanism of the League.

There are, then, motives for action that tell even in London. It doubtless is the case that in private the majority of the Cabinet and the Tory Party regards the League with impatient contempt, but these are precisely the people most susceptible to the imperialist argument. They have no respect for the Covenant, but they do not relish the idea of a hostile military power entrenched at the headwaters of the Nile and on the shores of the Red Sea. They would swallow an affront to Geneva with equanimity and even pleasure, but to bear with

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Christian patience a blow to British prestige is not their wont.

Finally, there is in England a big body of mass opinion that cares nothing for the imperial aspect of this question and knows nothing about the European complications, but on grounds of pure humanity views Mussolini's proceedings with horror and anger. These two trends of opinion, normally unsympathetic, might conceivably come together to support effective action for the prevention of this war. It is significant that the Archbishop of Canterbury, who moves in both these circles of opinion, has advocated the closing of the Suez Canal. If there were in the National Government a dashing personality, a man of action of the type of Palmerston or Lloyd George, this would be done without hesitation—would, indeed, have been done long ago. The government has, however, no such man, and it may fumble—hesitant, divided and ineffectual.

This survey ends, therefore, in uncertainty. The chances are that in its September meeting the League cannot, in spite of its habitual caution and timidity, avoid some decision unwelcome to Mussolini, which will cause him to quit it and to move toward the German camp. Neither an embargo on munitions nor yet an economic boycott would avail to stop this war. The only step that would be immediately effective must be taken at the Suez Canal by the British and French fleets together. That, however, would be conceivable only if London were ready for a firm alliance with Paris and Moscow. Failing this, the French will be slow to take any irreparably hostile action against Italy, and will cast themselves for the part of mediators. That promises ill for the future. For in that event the slaughter will not be prevented, the League will not be reanimated, nor will there arise on its ruins an alliance strong enough to keep the peace of Europe.

London. H. N. BRAILSFORD.

Soaking the Poor

WHEN THEIR legislatures adjourned this spring the consumers of eight states found that sales taxes had been levied upon them. The consumers in four states found old sales taxes reënacted. The consumers in three states found that the percentage on old sales taxes had been increased.

This economic plague now spreading over the country is a product of the depression. While to West Virginia goes the honor, such as it is, of introducing the sales tax to the United States in 1921, the other twenty-three sales taxes have been imposed since 1930. Beginning, often, at one percent or less, the rate of the tax is increased year by year. A tax of one percent is often absorbed by the seller, but a tax of more than one percent is shifted to the consumer; and, indeed, the more recent acts require the seller, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, to add the amount of the tax as a separate charge to the final price, so that the consumer shall certainly pay it.

Four states have one-percent taxes: Indiana, Maryland, Missouri and Oklahoma. Fourteen states have 2-percent taxes: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming. Six states have 3-percent taxes: California, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina and Ohio. Eleven other states have merchants'-license, gross-receipts, gross-income or chain-store taxes that in some cases resemble sales taxes. Three cities have 2-percent sales taxes: Daytona Beach and Miami, Florida, and New York City. Kansas City and St. Louis have one-half-percent merchants'-license taxes. The taxes in force vary widely in the goods or businesses exempted and in administrative features, but all have substantially the same effects.

How the Sales Tax Works Against the Poor.—The sales tax is a kind of gross-income tax that falls upon the payer in inverse proportion to income; the less a man earns, the greater the proportion of his income is taken in a sales tax. Using as a basis statistics on the consumers' market collected by The Business Week, Mabel L. Walker of the General Welfare Tax League has shown that a laborer with an income of $1,000 a year spends 60.9 percent of it for commodities upon which the sales tax falls. The poor find that the only important item in their expenditures that is free from a sales tax is rent.

At the other extreme, a man having an income of $1,000,000 a year will spend only one percent of it in taxable purchases. The rich, of course, spend a higher proportion of their income for wages and services than the poor. We have heard a great deal recently about soaking the rich; but a tax that soaks the poor 60.9 times as much as the rich is a tax that really soaks.

A tax of one percent exempting food takes $2.74 from the $1,000 laborer and eight cents per thousand dollars of income from the multimillionaire. But the usual tax is 2 percent, and most acts include food, so that the $1,000 laborer will pay $12 and the multimillionaire twenty cents per thousand. Such a reversal of the ability principle in taxation seems incredible, but when the tax is increased to 3 percent, as has been done now in six states, the $1,000 man pays $18.20, the man with $1,000,000 a year pays thirty cents per thousand. For all in-

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comes over $300,000 the sales tax is negligible; for all incomes under $2,500 it is very important.

Inequalities in the Tax Rate.—But the percentage of income spent upon taxable articles is only part of the injustice of the sales tax. When the legal rate is 2 percent, the actual rate on a given sale may be 20 percent, if one cent tax is collected on a five-cent article. One cent on a ten-cent article is 10 percent, on a twenty-cent article is 5 percent, and so on. Grocers say that the average sale in all grocery stores is twenty-three cents; a one-cent tax on the average sale, then, is 4.3 percent.

The poor, especially the very poor and the unemployed, must of necessity make their purchases in small amounts: ten cents to the baker, fifteen cents to the grocer, twenty-five cents to the coal man, and so on. The sales tax, therefore, inevitably falls upon them at many times the legal rate. The middle class and the wealthy can avoid most of this extra burden by purchasing in large quantities.

Various states have tried to prevent this increase in the rate by different devices, none very successful. Some states exempt all sales under a given amount, such as twenty-five cents; but then the tax is evaded by the division of a purchase into units that come under the exemption. Other states have tried stamps, but stamps cannot be attached to many articles, a bag of coal or a quart of milk, for instance. Still other states have tried tokens worth fractions of a cent or tax-coupon books, but these things are inconvenient, easily lost and readily counterfeited. The sales tax is just a hopelessly bad tax, and no amount of tinkering can make it anything else.

Ways of Avoiding Payments.—The wealthy, who spend but a small proportion of their income upon consumers' goods anyway, easily avoid part of the tax on them by having their purchases go through interstate commerce, which, under the Constitution, no state may tax. A woman in Cincinnati, wishing to avoid the sales tax on a fur coat, can go to Covington, Kentucky, to buy it, and have it sent to her in Ohio. Even though both Ohio and Kentucky have sales taxes she pays in neither state. This type of evasion has been most noticed near the borders of sales-tax states, but for bulky or expensive goods, or for goods having a standard price, it has been noticed in all parts of the taxing states. An owner of a large apartment or business building will clearly find it worth his while to buy his coal in carload lots from another state; the man who can buy only half a ton at a time can pay the sales tax.

In making expensive purchases, such as machinery, business concerns have avoided the sales tax by transferring the property through some other device than a sale, as by lease, rent or exchange. Thus a corporation may lease a dynamo for 999 years and save five thousand dollars; the consumer can pay the sales tax on his oatmeal.

Difficulties of Collection.—No one knows what proportion of the amount of the tax collected from the public is actually turned over to the state tax collector. The amount paid by large companies is probably nearly 100 percent, for they have to keep good books for their own use, and inspectors can check them easily. But probably the states are very fortunate if they get from the small retailers 75 percent of the amounts collected by them from the consumers. Many of these little concerns keep no books at all, or, if they keep any, they keep them in a most haphazard way. No state can afford to maintain the staff of inspectors and auditors that would be necessary to watch all the businesses that collect the tax, and, indeed, many states have concentrated on the large concerns and have, in effect, taken what the little men have felt like paying. When a small grocer's net profit on a single sale is often less than one-half percent, the assessment of a 2-percent sales tax on the customer puts a great strain on the honesty of the seller. When at the end of the month a grocer or hardware dealer finds that, after paying his rent, heat, light, clerk hire and other overhead, he has only fifty dollars for himself, and he has collected three hundred dollars for the state in sales tax, we can surmise that, human nature being what it is, somehow the state will not get its hands on all of the three hundred dollars.

With the exception of some chiselers who make, as one said, "more money on the sales tax than I do on my business," retailers are unanimously opposed to the tax. The retail merchants' associations have fought shoulder to shoulder with the state labor organizations against the tax. They recognize its unfairness; they know that it reduces purchasing power; and they see how it lowers the standard of living. They have their own reasons for opposing it, too; it increases their accounting costs; it upsets well established buying habits; it drives business to mail-order and other out-of-state companies; and it destroys "good will," for customers take out their sullen resentment on merchants, assuming that all retailers are chiseling.

What It Is Worth and Whom It Is For.—There is only one thing that can be said for a sales tax: it brings in immediately considerable sums of money, and its enforcement provides hundreds of jobs for hungry office seekers. It is collected a penny at a time, and sometimes it is concealed in the price, so that the taxpayer does not notice or does not know how heavily he is being taxed. It is popular with harassed legislators in that it thus picks the tax goose with a minimum of squawking. Besides, it falls mostly upon the poor, who are in no position to squawk even if they wanted to.

And what, we might now ask, is the reason for the spread of this vicious tax? Who wants it and why? In the last four years, while public interest has been centered upon Washington and stirring national problems, the state governments have

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faced very serious, if less sensational, problems. The ancient general-property tax has, in some states, almost entirely broken down. Schools have had to close, public functions have had to be curtailed. Meanwhile the states have had to meet a huge new expense, unemployment relief. For the last two years the federal government has adopted the very proper policy that the states must do their share of caring for the unemployed. At first, most of the states borrowed to meet relief needs, but their credit was not so good as that of the federal government, and, moreover, many of them soon approached their constitutional debt limitations. Even where a large part of the general-property tax was still being collected, with or without the sale of property for taxes, states soon approached tax limitations that made further increases in the mill levy impossible. The rates on the gasoline tax were generally jacked up, but the income from this source has been, of course, insufficient to meet the gigantic needs of relief.

To meet these heavy new requirements, Governors have recommended that the legislatures pass new tax laws. Frequently they have recommended both sales and income taxes on the naïve assumption that an income tax at half or less than half the rates of the federal income tax would offset the regressive incidence of the sales tax. To be charitable we may assume that they did not know how seriously unfair the sales tax is.

Some state chambers of commerce and bankers' associations have urged the sales tax to avoid an income tax. Of the wisdom of soaking the rich they are profoundly unconvinced, and since somebody has to be soaked to raise the necessary millions for relief, let it, they say, be the consumer. Instead of basing taxes upon ability to pay, base them upon inability to resist. A typical example was furnished in Pennsylvania this year when the state chamber of commerce led a campaign for a sales tax after Governor Earle recommended an income tax.

Another interest usually on the side of a sales tax is real estate. The real-estate dealers, the building-and-loan associations and the mortgage people have favored any tax to lighten the burden of the general-property tax on real estate. Their slogan is "broaden the tax base." The sales tax is so regressive, however, that the small-home owner finds the sales tax only an additional tax; he pays more in sales tax than he could possibly be relieved of in real-estate taxes, even if the real-estate tax for state purposes were eliminated. To quote once more from Dr. Walker, "Taxpayers with homes worth from $2,000 to $4,000, and with incomes ranging from $1,000 to $4,000, would find that they would have to pay on a [2-percent] sales tax about twice as much as they saved on the real-estate tax. It is not until we reach the owners of property approximating more than $25,000 that the sales tax relieves property." Viewed from any aspect the sales tax falls hardest, whenever it has been put into operation, upon him that hath not.

Alternatives to the Sales Tax.—No single solution for all financial problems of the states can be offered here. Some could, if they would, pay for relief out of existing revenues, but probably most of them need additional taxes. Whatever tax or taxes may be chosen, surely next to a tax on salt and bread, the sales tax is the worst. No state has explored the possibilities of an income tax with high rates and low exemptions, such as the British income tax. Last year the twenty-eight states that had income taxes then in effect collected $135,095,000, of which amount two states—New York and Wisconsin—collected 63 percent. But the states with sales taxes collected last year $254,572,000. A comparison of these figures will show who is carrying the burden of state relief, the rich or the poor.

In all her financial difficulties of recent years Great Britain has not resorted to the sales tax; but our income taxes—federal, state or both—do not come close to hers. In Europe the sales tax has been, as Professor E. R. A. Seligman once said, "the last resort of those countries which find themselves in such difficulties that they must subordinate all other principles of taxation to the one principle of adequacy." Here, the sales tax has been the first resort; instead of levying taxes for relief in accordance with ability to pay, our legislatures have compelled wage and salary workers to support the unemployed. And at the present rate of adoption every state will be soaking the poor by the year 1939.

DAYTON D. MCKEAN.

Feud

Corruption reaps the young: you dread
The menace of ancestral eyes.
Recoiling from the serpent head
Of fate, you blubber in surprise.

Exhausted fathers thinned the blood;
You curse your legacy of pain.
Darling of an infected brood,
You feel disaster climb the vein.

There's canker at the root, your seed
Denies the blessing of the sun,
The light essential to your need.
Your hopes are murdered and undone.

The dead leap to your throat, destroy
The meaning of your day; dark forms
Have scaled your walls, and spies betray
Your secrets to primordial swarms.

You meditate upon the nerves,
Inflame with hate. This ancient feud
Is seldom won. The spirit starves
Until the dead have been subdued.

THEODORE ROETHKE.

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The Plight of the Patient

AT MY home in town. 8 A.M. The phone. "This is the hospital. There's a man here to see you, name is Olsen."

"Ask him if it's urgent. I haven't had breakfast yet."

"I don't think it is. He walked up from town."

"Tell him I'll see him at my office at nine o'clock." I sit down at the table.

The phone. "This is the hospital. Dr. Tucker is here to do the tonsillectomy. Says you were to give Beatrice the anesthetic."

"O hell, I forgot all about it. I'll grab a cup of coffee and be over in ten minutes." I sit down and have a bite of toast.

The phone. "Dr. Tucker says he can get Terry to give the anesthetic if you wish."

"No, he'd make a charge; her folks haven't anything. I'll be there in a minute."

Beatrice, age eight, is a diabetic I have taken care of for three years. Her father works in a fish cannery during the season, which lasts about four months. I am very fond of Beatrice. It takes courage for a youngster to stick to a rigid diabetic diet. Beatrice never breaks over. She is happy as any normal child though she will need insulin all her life. The cost of the insulin takes all her parents can spare. I have never sent them a bill.

8:45. Tonsils out. I give the nurse and dietician directions, look at chart of patient in 306. She has tuberculosis of the right lung, tuberculosis of the bowel. Slept well, ate supper and breakfast and kept them down without distress. First time for days. She is twenty, just married. Complains of stomach trouble, lost twenty-four pounds in four months; there had been no diagnosis. On the suggestion of a friend, she had tried barley water. I plan to keep her in bed, build her up; later have her operated upon; possibly resect colon.

I step out into the lobby to leave for my office where Olsen will be waiting.

"Oh, Dr. Archer, I want to speak to you about your patient." Bookkeeper speaking. "Do you know anything about her finances? We can't keep her any longer. She made no deposit on her bill; X-rays and room already amount to $65. Her husband is only a garage mechanic, I don't suppose he has anything."

"She hasn't discussed her finances with me. She is seriously ill and will need the best of care. I think you'll get your money all right."

"That's what you always say. We've got too much on the books now. This is no charity institution. Why don't you send her to the county hospital?"

"She would die within a month at the County," I reply. "They have no facilities for this kind of case. She'll be able to raise the money somehow."

"She'd better or she can't stay here another day."

9:10. My office. "Good morning, sir, is your name Olsen?" He is a big raw-boned man, over sixty, in a shiny sack suit; his large unshined shoes reveal bunions.

"I come to ask what it cost to have my wife in the Crescent Hospital. She has rheumatism pretty bad. Can't walk for the last six month. She is in St. Mary's Hospital and it is too expensive."

"How much are you paying?" I ask.

"The bed is five dollars a day in the ward, the extras are over fifty dollars already. She has to be there six month, maybe longer. I ask the doctor what am I going to do when my money gives out and he says that is for me to worry about. I always pay my bills, doctor. I am a stonemason, but for about a year my eyes go back on me. I can't work any more and the bank took my home away because I couldn't keep up the payments. Everywhere I seem to hit a stone wall. Someone told me about the University Hospital. I went to the city to inquire. The ambulance cost fifty dollars because she can't walk. Then the doctor tells me she can't stay at that hospital because she is a chronic disease. So I come home. I am no business man, doctor. I learn my trade in the old country and work hard for thirty-five year; now I got nothing but trouble."

"Perhaps the county hospital would be the place for your wife."

"I am afraid of the county hospital. I thought maybe I would take her there; then I met a man coming over on the bus this morning. He said, 'Don't take your wife there if you expect to see her again.' "

"That's all nonsense," I say. "Your wife will get fair treatment at the County. The doctors and nurses are competent. Of course they are overworked. You call Dr. Johnson; I'm sure he will do everything he can."

"Every place I seem to hit a stone wall." Tears stream down his face. He does not sob. He keeps his head up.

As Olsen goes out, the general manager of the Blank Finance Company steps up. He is a florid man about six feet tall with an expressionless mouth that looks as if it has never smiled.

"I got your letter," he almost growls, looking down at some papers he draws from a brief case. "Of course we can't entertain any such proposition. We loaned you money in good faith and we can't take any loss."

"The hell you can't."

"No, we absolutely can do nothing."

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I stand up facing him. "Let me tell you something. When I borrowed money from your company six years ago to put up this building, I put everything I had into it. I agreed to turn over to you all income, including rental for my own offices. When you made that loan you first satisfied yourselves that it was a good investment. It *was* a good investment, and for four years paid the interest, taxes, insurance and a substantial part of the principal. The depression came along. I had to reduce rents. That was my loss. You got your seven percent right along. During the past year the building hasn't earned seven percent. I suggested that you reduce the interest to five percent. Now you still say you can't take any loss. Well, you'll have to take a loss. I won't sign a renewal. You can take the goddam building and . . ."

He gives me an amazed look, picks up his briefcase and leaves.

I go to the reception room door as I hear a buzz.

"Come in, Mr. Ferrari." He is accompanied by his daughter, a bright schoolgirl of sixteen, who acts as interpreter. The father, an Italian farmer, speaks very little English. At fifty, he looks seventy, pale and emaciated. He has a cancer of the stomach but has not been told.

"I just got the report of the blood count. It hasn't improved as much as I had hoped after the blood transfusion the other day."

"What do you advise now, doctor?"

"There is only one thing to do. More blood transfusions and have Dr. Coleman operate. The X-ray shows that the growth is not too far advanced. It is his only chance."

"But doctor, don't you think he can wait? He is so worried about the expense of an operation. How much will it cost?"

"That will depend on your circumstances. Dr. Coleman is a kindly man and I am sure will be very reasonable."

"Dad got almost nothing for his crop last year, and this year there is hardly any."

"You talk it over with him and with your mother. It is the only thing to do."

(Mr. Ferrari has since died for lack of the operation which doubtless would have kept him alive for several years longer.)

Loud knocking on the reception-room door. I open it to find Jimmie Butler, red-faced, ready to rush in.

"Oh, pardon me, you busy?" he blurts out.

"No, I've just finished. What's the excitement?"

Jimmie Butler, a former movie extra, has been running a small local paper. He has an apartment in the building and his rent is always in arrears.

"You've got to help me out, Doc. I've been playing philanthropist and now I'm in a jam. About three weeks ago I met a young couple. The wife wanted to start a studio and advertise in my paper. They were broke so I gave them credit and told them they could share my apartment until they got settled. They've taken possession of the whole place. I can't write a damned line. They bring their friends and customers and drink up my liquor. He uses my clean shirts; she leaves her lingerie all over my desk, and all in all it's a stinking mess. You've got to help me out."

"Why don't you order them out?"

"I don't want to make them sore. They ought to have enough decency to leave without being told. I've got an idea. You write me a note saying you are obliged to double the rent since there are three instead of one occupying the apartment. I'll show them your letter and maybe they'll tumble. If that doesn't work, I'll have to lock them out. There's no privacy. I haven't even a place to take my own girl. By the way, Doc, you know those pills I asked you about. She took them anyway, against your advice. They didn't work. There's another five bucks shot to hell. But she's going to get it fixed. One of your confreres is going to do it as soon as she can scrape up fifty bucks. He wants it on the spot. She offered to pay him five a week. Nothing doing. I haven't another sou. Say, can you let me off my rent again this month?"

Jimmie smiles his disarming smile.

"Don't forget that note. So long, Doc."

"Come in, Mrs. Knoepfel. How is your throat today?"

"A little better, doctor, but still I can't reach the high notes like I used to. Why, I was always able to sing high C easily. I don't have to reduce do I doctor, I only weigh two hundred twenty now, I used to weigh two-sixty, grand opera singers are all plump, I know I'll make the Metropolitan, I'm so full of music, I just finished a new ballad, its about the N.R.A., should be adopted by the Democratic Party for a campaign song. Soon as I get the $35,000 for my scenario I'm going on Broadway, soon be out of the woods, husband making only fifteen dollars a week when he works, I play and sing but I like the creative work best, why when I walk down the street I think of new tunes, symphonies or plots for scenarios, I'm working on an American symphony now, I have the—"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Knoepfel, I'd like to get the report on the spinal-fluid examination; I'll phone the hospital."

While the chatter continues, I add the following to my previous notes: "Spinal Wasserman—4 plus; delusions of grandeur; beginning general paresis."

"How long did you say you took treatment after that skin eruption in 1924, Mrs. Knoepfel?"

"About three months, maybe more. The doctor told me to come back in a month for more injections, but they were awfully expensive; anyhow I hadn't a sign of anything so I guessed I was all well."

"Didn't the doctor tell you you would have to be under observation for at least two or three years and have more treatments?"

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"Yes, but I couldn't afford any more treatments."

"I am obliged to tell you, Mrs. Knoepfel, that the infection which you incurred ten years ago has not been entirely cured. It is still present in your nervous system. You should go to a hospital at once. There is a very good chance that further progress of the disease can be arrested."

"But doctor, I couldn't afford that now. In a few weeks I'll have money from my scenario and then I can just get everything fixed up and——"

"Mrs. Knoepfel, you simply must not delay this business another day."

"O fiddlesticks, doctor, I'll be all right as soon as I get over this cold. Goodbye, doctor, I must put down some tunes running through my head."

12:15. I enter the charges for the morning's work. Total, $4. "I'll probably collect half that. They can take the goddam building. Guess I'll be lucky if I can pay the rent." I put on my hat and go out.

PAUL ARCHER.

Science and the Government

THE Science Advisory Board has taken on a tough job. Set up by President Roosevelt in July, 1933, as a body whose findings and recommendations carry no executive authority, its task is nothing less than the complete overhauling of the federal government's scientific and research activities. Its first report—prepared by the chairman, Dr. Karl T. Compton, with the aid of many of the country's most distinguished scientists—is a document rich in information and bristling with problems that have a way of reaching out from the laboratory and affecting our daily lives in everything from the food we can't get enough of to the radio programs of which we often get too much.

The research activities of the government are distributed among forty bureaus, of which eighteen may be regarded as definitely scientific. All, however—particularly the National Bureau of Standards, Geological Survey, Bureau of Mines and the many agencies of the Department of Agriculture—engage in work of the utmost social importance under what seem to be appalling handicaps, technical, administrative and financial. Consider, for example, that these forty bureaus will receive, in 1934-35, total appropriations of something like $70,000,000: less than one-tenth the amount set aside for military uses alone, and, according to Dr. Compton, three-tenths of one percent of the government's total budget. Add to this the fact that since the depression started, appropriations for science and research have been cut by amounts as high as 60 percent, and it becomes clear why Dr. Compton, in a recent address, rebuked this country for having, "with all its boasted progressiveness, paid less official attention to science as a means of combatting our present difficulties than any of the other Great Powers"—including, as he specifically emphasized, Soviet Russia.

The bulk of the report consists of a summary of the Board's activities, followed by a number of exceptionally instructive Appendices and a concluding "Proposal of a Recovery Program of Science Progress." Here are a few of the more urgent problems with which the numerous specialists on the Board are concerning themselves:

In the Department of Agriculture the Weather Bureau needs reorganizing to enable it to provide more frequent and more accurate service based in part on the recently developed methods of "air-mass analysis." Four, instead of the customary two or three, daily weather maps are recommended, as well as the closest possible coöperation not only with the flood and erosion-control services of the government, but also with the Army and Navy Air Corps, the Naval Bureau of Aeronautics, and with the meteorological activities of other countries, chiefly Canada, Mexico and Russia (Siberia). In the same Department recommendations have been made for the improvement of the work of the Bureau of Chemistry and Soils. The Department of the Interior is responsible for one of the most essential and most seriously crippled of all government agencies: the Bureau of Standards. It is estimated that the work of this bureau—fundamental in all industrial and production fields—has been reduced by 70 percent in the past few years, and that much of the work it is still able to do is of the nature of routine testing for the government's supply services; work not specified in the organic Act that created the Bureau.

Heavy burdens rest upon the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines, both of them internationally famous for the range and quality of their work, but today so badly out of step with the country's needs that even the administration is worried: chiefly, it must be admitted, on the grounds of "national defense." It appears that, despite twenty mapping bureaus scattered through various Departments—or rather, because of such inefficient scattering—this country is still without a complete official map. Not even a half-completed one. Furthermore, knowledge of our mineral resources is inexcusably spotty and jumbled, a condition that the Bureau of Mines, under its new Director, is now striving earnestly to correct.

And what of the Patent Office, which is so undermanned and overworked that "over 65 percent of all patents which come up for litigation are declared invalid by the courts"? A nation celebrated for technical ingenuity and for its admiration of the

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inventor supplies, through no fault of its personnel, patents that are frankly regarded as "invitations to sue." This being so, it is a little difficult to understand how the Science Advisory Board will proceed with its plan for "stimulating the development of new and preferably non-competitive industries."

With this phase of the problem, however, the Science Advisory Board does not deal. It could not very well do so under an arrangement that tacitly accepts as final the economic motive of private initiative, private ownership and the domination of big business—many of whose most prominent technical leaders are closely associated with its work. What we do get is the "Recovery Program" for the rehabilitation of science through a system of public works sponsored by the government.

This program recommends the expenditure, over a period of six years, of the staggering sum of $16,000,000. Something less than $3,000,000 a year, to be devoted to projects like the following:

"Air-mass analysis" investigations to be conducted in some twenty strategically located stations in the United States.

Studies in the new science of "soil mechanics"—which has nothing to do with drought, but only with the behavior of soil under mechanical stress.

Surveys and researches for the improvement of America's sewage-disposal methods.

Practical large-scale development of fog-dissipation systems.

"Cryogenic research," which is expected to be of great benefit to the chemical industry. Also the manufacture of "heavy water" and its compounds.

Long-distance transmission of electric power, an admirable idea if only the public-utility interests would coöperate.

Geographic and geological surveys, including a nationwide study, for planning purposes, of our mineral resources and their use.

The social aspects of mechanization and of technological developments in general. Recommendations include the imposition of a "temporary tax on new labor-displacing machinery": an idea remarkably similar to certain restrictive measures in Germany, where also unemployment and science walk arm in arm down a broad highway paved, from end to end, with good intentions. How, we may ask, will this idea appeal to the durable-goods industries? Is the Science Advisory Board aware of the fact—brought out in The American Machinist's recent quinquennial survey of "machinery in place"—that 65 percent of the country's production equipment is ten years old or over, and in urgent need of replacement?

The administration of the above program is committed to the National Research Council, working in conjunction with the government and industry. The year 1940 is suggested as a good one in which to celebrate its first triumphs. That will not be too soon for the 20,000,000-odd inhabitants of the country now on relief. Dr. Compton (who has elsewhere expressed the opinion that, "as a people, and therefore as reflected in our national policies, we have been more lucky than intelligent") and his colleagues on the Science Advisory Board may be depended upon to do their best. They will undoubtedly discover and uncover much, as they have already done, and they will continue to publish impressive material on what science and technology *could be* in a properly organized society. For this—but only, it is to be feared, as for small mercies—we may be thankful.

Perhaps "Advisory" is too weak a word; perhaps what we need, and that very soon, is a Science *Compulsory* Board.

HAROLD WARD.

The North

Our single purpose was to walk through snow
With faces swung to their prodigious North
Like compass iron. As clerks in whited banks
With bird-claw pens column virgin paper
To snow we added footprints.
Extensive whiteness drowned
All sense of space. We tramped through
Static, glaring days, time's suspended blank.
That was in spring and autumn. Summer struck
Water over rocks, and half the world
Became a ship with a deep keel, the booming floes
And icebergs with their little birds.
Twittering snow bunting, Greenland wheatear
Red-throated divers; imagine butterflies
Sulphurous cloudy yellow; glory of bees
That suck from saxifrage; crowberry,
Bilberry, cranberry, *pyrola uniflora.*
There followed winter in a frozen hut
Warm enough at the kernel, but dare to sleep
With head against the wall—ice gummed my hair!
Hate Culver's loud breathing, despise Freeman's
Fidget for washing: love only the dogs
That whine for scraps and scratch. Notice
How they run better (on short journeys) with a bitch.
In that, different from us.

Return, return, you warn. We do. There is
A network of railways, money, words, words, words.
Meals, papers, exchanges, debates,
Cinema, wireless; the worst is marriage.
We cannot sleep. At night we watch
A speaking clearness through cloudy paranoia.
These questions are white rifts. Was
Ice our anger transformed? The raw, the motionless
Skies, were these the spirit's hunger?
The continual and hypnotized march through snow
The dropping nights of precious extinction, were these
Only the wide invention of the will,
The frozen will's evasion? If this exists
In us as madness here, as coldness
In these summer, civilized sheets: is the North
Over there, a tangible real madness
A glittering simpleton, one without towns
Only with bears and fish, a staring eye,
A new and singular sex?

STEPHEN SPENDER.

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Washington Notes

Assaying the 1936 Campaign—How Much Can Roosevelt Lose and Still Win?—Third Party Chances

IN ANOTHER two weeks Mr. Roosevelt's trip to the Pacific Coast will mark the opening, in effect, of the 1936 presidential campaign. Mr. Roosevelt has served thirty months, and has had three sessions of Congress in which to enact his program. Solely from the politician's point of view, how much support does he now command?

Since the United States is really three nations—the wheat and hog-growing West, the cotton-growing South, and the industrial Northeast—a single answer would be misleading. He is still strong in the West. At the Republican "grass roots" convention last June in Springfield, Illinois, largely attended by farmers, no speaker dared attack the A.A.A. Mr. Roosevelt's strength, of course, varies. With large-scale farm operators of the type that finds its spokesman in Dan Casement of Manhattan, Kansas, he is far from popular. Also, the dry farmers of the Dakotas are angry at his treatment of Father Coughlin.

In the industrial Northeast, there is no single issue, since the demise of the N.R.A., that has the importance of the A.A.A. in the West. The truce between Mr. Roosevelt and big business, so painfully negotiated a year ago by Raymond Moley, has been shattered beyond repair. If the voting strength of big business is negligible, its campaign contributions and control of newspapers and the radio are extremely important.

Mr. Roosevelt must place his hope of success on the petty bourgeoisie and the workers, a combination that in the present circumstances may prove to be a skittish team. Because the stake of small manufacturers and storekeepers in the present order is primarily psychological, they are likely to turn reactionary with rabid violence if a class issue is presented to them. It is reasonable to suppose that before the 1936 election the Supreme Court will declare the National Labor Relations Board—the crucial element in Mr. Roosevelt's labor policy—unconstitutional. If he then follows the urging of the A.F. of L. and advocates changing the Constitution, will he be able to hold the small business man against a Republican candidate making an emotional appeal for traditionalism? Until he makes clear his position on the Constitution, his hold on the Northeastern states must be classed as doubtful. Further, his refusal to permit Governor Davey to hold a special election was a confession of weakness in Ohio. The Guffey coal bill has increased his prospects in Pennsylvania, but victory there is uncertain.

On the other hand, Illinois and New York seem sure. In Illinois, Patrick A. Nash's Chicago machine, one of the most remarkable organizations in the country's history, will produce what votes are needed. In New York, the hatred of Tammany Hall for Mr. Roosevelt has, if anything, increased during the last two years, and the unemployed are seething under the severities of the relief program, but neither Tammany nor the unemployed will vote for a reactionary Republican. If Mr. Roosevelt can hold the West and South, the seventy-six electoral votes of New York and Illinois will enable him to win the election.

The outcome next year will not be the landslide of 1932. There are already small, but politically important, groups of people who will not vote for Mr. Roosevelt under any circumstances—big-city bankers, anti-union industrialists, food and cotton processors, public-utility executives. Their number will be largely increased if the constitutional issue is raised. The probable closeness of the election has presented a sharp dilemma to the leaders of a potential third-party movement. Since the country would know that a few thousand votes in half a dozen pivotal states might change the result, everything that a third-party candidate said and did would receive rapt attention. He would have larger meetings, and only a little less newspaper space, than either Mr. Roosevelt or the Republican candidate. He would have the opportunity—denied the elder La Follette in 1924—of placing the left-wing program clearly before the country, and preparing the ground for victory in 1940. At the same time, he might easily throw the election to the reactionaries and fascists. Conspicuous possible third-party candidates, like Governor Philip La Follette, Governor Olson and Mayor LaGuardia, are reported to feel that the risk is too great. Against this, however, it is argued that to coöperate in Mr. Roosevelt's reëlection is to court the same partial extinction that overtook the Progressives in 1916, when they failed to nominate a candidate, and that beginning a new movement will be no more dangerous in 1936 than in 1940.

The third-party threat of Huey Long seems to have collapsed. It was based upon his ability to deprive Roosevelt of Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi, a total of forty electoral votes. Six months ago, this threat was real. Since then, Governor Talmadge, intoxicated by national publicity, has decided that if anyone runs against Roosevelt in the Georgia primaries, it will be he. A few days ago, the candidates backed by Senator Bilbo defeated those backed by Long in a Mississippi primary. In Louisiana and Arkansas, the administration is fighting Long with every weapon at its command. The most recent proposal, which it is hoped will break his power, is a congressional investigation of the expenditures of the Long machine.

I wish to register dissent to the interpretation of the news by the Washington "corps of correspondents" on two recent occasions. The first concerns the unanimous nomination of Senator Borah as Republican presidential candidate. It is true that a questionnaire, circulated among party officers by Bob (Tanglefoot) Lucas, showed a wide majority in Mr. Borah's favor. But this tells no more than that party leaders do not wish to commit themselves on a candidate eight months before convention time, and that they admire Mr. Borah's speeches attacking the constitutionality of the New Deal. Mr. Borah is now seventy years old, and there is an unwritten law against the nomination of a man of that age. It is not a fair or wise rule, but it exists.

The other dissent concerns the newspapers' neglect of a reference to our national economic troubles in Mr. Roosevelt's recent radio speech. Mr. Roosevelt spoke of them as the "recent depression." The news that the depression is officially past is something that newspaper readers, particularly the unemployed, would like to hear.

Washington. **T. R. B.**

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Other People's Money

Mice Out of New Deal Mountain—One: by Carter Glass—Two: by the Ensemble

TWO OF the latest mice delivered by the heaving New Deal mountain are the banking and utility bills. Both were subjected to so many changes in both houses, and then in committees, and finally in conference, that just what kind of mice these little beasties are has been obscured. Certainly they are not saber-toothed mice. Indeed, like their brothers and sisters in the New Deal's mighty cavalry of highly advertised mice, these little creatures will have to do most of their nibbling with their toothless gums.

The banking bill set out to be a revolution designed to transfer the control of our money system from the bankers to the government. Marriner Eccles, governor of the Federal Reserve Board, produced a bill drawn to effect that reform. Its special device was to give the Reserve Board appointed by the President control of the open-market operations of the system. It is in these open-market operations that the Reserve system buys or sells Reserve bank assets, chiefly government bonds, and thus is enabled to expand or contract the amount of bank credit and, in certain circumstances, the amount of Reserve currency in circulation. It was thus around this point the battle raged.

The redoubtable Senator Carter Glass, snorting Bourbon fires through a peasant nose, led the fight against what he called an attempt to put the banking system under the control of politicians. But there were other issues and as the fight got warmer, still other issues got into the battle. Here let us see if we can clear up just what happened.

1. The first part of the bill dealt with deposit insurance. But one feature of this is important. Eccles wanted to move in the direction of a more unified banking system by forcing state banks to join the Federal Reserve system. A provision requiring all state banks to join the system by July 1, 1937, in order to enjoy the blessing of deposit insurance would have gone a long way in this direction. But Congress finally limited this to banks with deposits of $1,000,000 or over—which "saved" 6,500 banks to the state systems—and it put off the final deadline to July 1, 1942.

2. The second part of the bill dealt with the organization of the Reserve Board and its open-market operations. There were men in Congress who believed in a central bank owned by the government. Secretary Morgenthau told the Senate committee he favored the government's buying up the stock of the Reserve banks from the private banks and owning it outright. But as the good Secretary knows little of such things, it is to be assumed that he was put up to saying this as a kind of threat as to the darker things that might lie ahead if these mild proposals were not accepted.

Under the old system the open-market committee was made up of five governors of the Reserve banks. As these are appointees of the banks, which are owned by the bankers, this important function was kept in the bankers' hands. Eccles proposed that it be shifted to a committee of five—three Reserve Board members and two governors—giving the board a three-to-two majority on the committee, and hence control. Senator Glass forced a change of this in the Senate edition of the bill. He made it a committee of twelve—the seven members of the Reserve Board and five governors. This, ostensibly, gave the government a seven-to-five majority. But the artless Senator had in the bill two other little jokers. One prohibited the President from appointing more than four of one political party to the Board. This more or less assured the presence of three Republicans—and you know how Republicans feel about bankers. Thus the five banker members of the committee would have to get but a single one of those Republicans to split even with the government. And with two of them, they would have an actual majority. The other joker was perhaps worse. It required that at least two members of the Board must have had previous banking experience. Once a banker always a banker, is a good motto to remember.

In the end, the committee was kept at twelve, but the provision about only four from one party and two from the banks were eliminated. So as matters stand there will be a committee of twelve—seven Reserve Board members and five governors of banks—a seven-to-five majority for the government. But the possibility of the bankers' getting one of those Reserve Board members is not only good, it is almost certain. Hence we may well doubt that any important victory has been won or any change made.

3. The third part of the bill dealt with certain organizational features of banks. The most important was the attempt made by the champion of our banking system, Carter Glass—who already had four doctor's degrees as a mark of the high regard of our leading university trustees—to put the Morgans back into the business of mixing banking with security merchandising. It consisted of two provisions, one permitting national commercial banks to engage again in security underwriting; the other permitting private bankers or commercial bankers to be officers and directors of two banks. The deadly character and significance of that little provision hidden away in the Senate bill were advertised in this department promptly. The Senate passed it, but the House saw the significance of it and knocked it out. My prediction is that when the appointments are made and the incident is forgotten the banking fraternity will be well satisfied with this bill. It has already had the highest praise of the president of the American Bankers' Association.

This leaves but little room to say what the holding-company bill came to in the end. First of all, it does not prohibit holding companies, but recognizes them and attempts to regulate them. Moreover, nothing will happen very quickly under this act, which in the main provides for the regulation of holding companies engaged in interstate power business. That the most controverted part of this bill, Section 11, would put holding companies out of business, has been a dishonest argument from the start.

The bill, as somewhat modified, provides that the Securities and Exchange Commission must study interstate holding companies, which must register with the Commission before December 1, 1935. The Commission will study and investigate until January 1, 1938. After that it may issue orders requiring simplification of capital structures and limiting holding companies to integrated systems. But the orders cannot become effective until companies have had

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the opportunity to be heard. As there are many companies and as the affairs of each are endlessly complex, these hearings (which cannot begin until after January, 1938) will probably drag on for several years. Then the Commission may require the simplification of structures. But the company will have a year to comply and may be given an additional year by the Commission. So you see it will probably be after 1940 before measures are taken, if any. And who will be President in 1940? The Commission may limit the holding company to a single integrated system—but it may, if it thinks wise, permit the holding company to hold more than one integrated system. In other words, it will boil down to what the Commission may think when we are in 1940.

However, it must be said that the bill is a beginning. It recognizes federal obligation to regulate interstate holding-company systems and it recognizes the holding-company problem. It still needs a teething ring, if nothing else.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

Why No Census of the Unemployed?—Some Consistent Guesses—Violence Enters Labor Disputes

THERE was talk in Washington last spring of the desirability and necessity of having a new census of the unemployed this fall. It now develops that the project has been definitely dropped. My scientific curiosity leads me to wonder whether the adverse trend in employment in recent months was merely a coincidence or a causal factor leading up to this decision. Could it be that Democratic Party bosses, realizing that the results of such a census would almost certainly be of no value as campaign material—except to the Republicans—decided that it might be better to let the inquiry wait until a later, and safer, year? If so, they are to be commended for their astuteness.

Since April there has been a steady decline in the employment index of the Department of Labor until now (the latest report is for July) it is back to where it was a year ago, in fact, to where it was in September and October of 1933. Any estimate of the total number of jobless must, of course, be pretty much a guess, since no actual figures are available, other than those of the 1930 census. Thus, an examination of the table below will show rather wide discrepancies among the estimates made by four separate organizations: the National Industrial Conference Board (serving employers), the Alexander Hamilton Institute (serving investors), the American Federation of Labor, and the National Research League, a left-wing organization. The differences may be attributed partly to the political divergence of the groups, partly to the inadequacy of the statistical data available, and partly to method (the Conference Board, for example, does not consider people on work relief as unemployed, a fact that makes its estimates appear more conservative than they really are).

Despite these variable factors, however, there is an amazing agreement among these four organizations on the trend of unemployment, if one compares their estimates at given periods:

GUESSES AT UNEMPLOYMENT

	March 1933	*October 1933*	*July 1935*
N.I.C.B.	13,300,000	9,924,000	10,015,000
A.H.I.	16,814,000	12,810,000	13,019,000
A.F. of L.	13,689,000	10,122,000	11,000,000[1]
N.R.L.	17,000,000	13,330,000	14,210,000

[1] June estimate.

The striking thing revealed in this table is that all the estimates agree on two points: (1) that there was a marked drop in unemployment in the first six months of the New Deal, ranging from three and a half to four million; and (2) that there has been an increase in unemployment since October, 1933, ranging from one hundred thousand to a million. This does not tell us, of course, whether ten million or fourteen million is the correct number, but it does suggest that a problem, already serious, is getting worse. It is especially disconcerting in view of the tendency of production, business activity and prices to reach into new high ground and to leave the unemployed, apparently, by the wayside.

As a footnote to the foregoing, a recent bulletin of the National Industrial Conference Board is of special interest. It points out that since 1929 the increase in industrial output per man-hour worked has been little short of amazing—nearly 30 percent. Though technological improvements account for some of this increased efficiency, the chief factors involved, according to the N.I.C.B., were "a sifting of the labor force, the most competent being retained, and a stiffening of administrative control." Of course, the reward of the present labor force for being the "most competent" and for turning out nearly 30 percent more products per hour has not been, as might seem justified, a corresponding increase in hourly wage rates over 1929.

The Oregon State Federation of Labor, at its recent convention, voted for the formation of a new party, a labor party to represent "the interests of the producers." The convention denounced the profit system and declared that "the retention of profits by any commercial or financial institution is immoral so long as there is any citizen willing and able to work who is not employed." Though this is probably the most complete break yet made by any state group with the traditional A.F. of L. policy of rewarding labor's friends and punishing its enemies, it is but symptomatic of a growing revolt. This is evident in the endorsement of independent political action by the Wisconsin State Federation, by some national and numerous local unions throughout the country, and by the official Central Labor Unions in cities such as Paterson and Passaic, New Jersey. In other cities, such as Chicago, Hartford and Toledo, conferences representing the local unions have been held and are working toward the same goal.

Ending a strike of more than three months' duration, 4,000 employees of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation at Camden voted last week to return to work. The settlement was made possible by President Roosevelt, who took the dispute out of the hands of Labor and Navy Department officials after they had offered the strikers an arbitration proposal that would have meant complete defeat

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for the union. In its stead, the President offered a plan providing for the reëmployment of all strikers and for arbitration of demands and grievances by a board appointed by the President. Thus, in effect, the union won unofficial recognition, while the company is forced to submit to arbitration—something that for three months it had steadfastly refused to do.

On the question of who is responsible for violence in labor disputes the following items are of interest. In Omaha, Nebraska, Chief of Police Samardick has issued an ultimatum declaring that he is determined to stop all picketing by striking street-railway employees, no matter how peacefully it may be conducted. Said Chief Samardick: "We'll use persuasion first. If that fails, then we'll resort to tear gas. If necessary, we'll use bullets." The excuse for this is a state law prohibiting mass picketing, which ought to be repealed to remove Chief Samardick's alibi. In Santa Rosa, California, a band of 300 vigilantes kidnaped two labor leaders, allegedly "Communists," and tarred and feathered them. A number of the vigilantes have been identified as leading citizens of the community, but the authorities have failed thus far to take any action. In Terre Haute, military rule continues with the usual intimidation and arrest of active labor sympathizers. And as a contribution to peaceful union conduct, Joseph P. Ryan, International President of the International Longshoremen's Union, has suggested that it is time to root the Communists out of the A.F. of L. "by force." "Unless we act soon," he told the United Press, "it is quite likely we will have to use firearms to get them out before they upset the labor movement."

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

CORRESPONDENCE

Iowa Prosperity

SIR: Iowa is the richest state in the Union, per capita, and Emmetsburg is in the midst of one of the best farming regions in the state. One of the renters here has just finished threshing his oats with a net loss of $38.87. He lives in his own house, not one furnished by the landlord. The figures are as follows: 35 acres times 35 bushels per acre, equals 1,225 bushels sold for 24 cents a bushel equals $294.00. His costs were:

Seed	$120.00
Threshing	30.62
Twine	7.00
Cutting and binding	35.00
Dinner for threshing crew	10.00
Rent (two-fifths)	118.00
Hauling grain	12.25
Total	$332.87

The straw, by agreement, went to the landlord. Nothing is included for his own wages, nor for horse feed. The landlord gets $118.00 less taxes of $43.75, netting him $74.25, plus straw. Rainfall has been good this year.

This same farmer has rented another 40 acres that he has in corn. The indications are that he will get 30 bushels to the acre, making in all 1,200 bushels, of which 600 bushels go to the landlord. At the price now quoted for December corn on the Chicago market he will get $267.00. His costs will be:

Seed	$12.00
Shelling and hauling	60.00
Feed for horses	80.00
Total	$152.00

From his net of $115.00, subtract the loss of $38.87 on the oats, giving $77.13—from which should be taken depreciation on machinery and horses, interest on investment of $160.00 in horses, and his wages, and worry.

FRANK G. SPENCER,
Associate Professor of History,
Emmetsburg, Iowa. Central Y.M.C.A. College, Chicago.

Liberty in Wisconsin

SIR: In The New Republic of June 26 there appeared an article "Where Civil Liberties Stand Today." In its compilation of legislation in the 1935 sessions of the various state legislatures there is an omission. The table does not show that there was introduced in the Assembly of the Wisconsin Legislature a proposal to prohibit the appearance on the ballot of the names of parties or persons advocating overthrow of government. This was in the form of a joint resolution to amend the state Constitution. It was killed in the Assembly.

NINA B. DUNCAN,
Madison, Wis. Wisconsin Legislative Reference Library.

Plutarch, Pericles and F. D. R.

SIR: Has it occurred to readers of The New Republic how like Plutarch's "Pericles" is our Franklin D. Roosevelt? Dust off your copy of that classic and check the six excerpts below:

1. "(He) was of the noblest birth both on his father's and mother's side."

2. "Much of his success was attributable to his sweetness of voice in public assembly, and to his directness and simplicity of address."

3. "But when Aristides (Coolidge) was dead, and Themistocles (Hoover) driven out, and Cimon (The Happy Warrior) for the most part kept abroad on his expeditions in (Wall Street and at Thirty-fourth Street and Fifth Avenue) he, seeing things in this posture, advanced and took his side, not with the rich and the few but with the poor and the many, contrary to his natural bent, which was far from democratical."

4. "(The left) describe his rule as an aristocratical government that went by the name of a democracy, but was, indeed, the supremacy of a single great man, while (the right) say, on the contrary, that by him the common people were encouraged and led on to idleness and dependence on public moneys."

5. "Lavish was his spending." But, alas!

6. "After this he was no longer the same man he had been before, nor as gentle and familiar with the people . . . but quitting that loose remiss, he turned those soft and flowery modulations to the austerity of aristocratical and regal rule."

Is the shadow of the coming elections turning Mr. Roosevelt back to the aristocratical and regal rulers, "as was his natural bent"? Many of his actions of late, the surrender of his four billions to big-business approved projects, to mention but one, would seem to argue affirmatively.

Edgefield, S. C. HUGH BRADLEY.

Technological Improvement

SIR: A book review by Harold Ward on page 230 of the July 3 issue says that "technical improvements [of the die-casting machine] have made it possible to approach complete automaticity, so that production in one case reaches the staggering figure of nearly 12,000 pieces a day." The fact of the matter is that one medium-sized semi-automatic die-casting machine, built by the A.C. Spark Plug Company and operated by one man, will in one eight-hour shift produce 30,000 door bumpers or 20,000 curtain rollers.

Detroit, Mich. CHARLES Y. ROBERTSON.

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Bargaining Under the N.L.R.A.

SIR: In The New Republic of July 17, Mr. William P. Mangold states that the National Labor Relations Act, as passed by Congress, limits the power of the Labor Board to designate the unit appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining to the "employer unit, plant unit or any subdivision thereof." He deplores the deletion of the term "craft unit," as enabling an anti-union board to discriminate against craft as opposed to company unions. But the language in the law is "employer unit, *craft unit,* plant unit, or subdivision thereof." At no stage in the two-year legislative history of the measure was the term "craft unit" struck out.

Mr. Mangold then quotes part of Section 2, paragraph 9 of the Railway Labor Act of 1934, to the effect that the Railway Labor Board "shall designate who may participate in the election and establish the rules to govern the election." He hails this "broad" power to fix the bargaining unit, as the harbinger of "industrial" unionism, and deprecates by contrast what he considers the narrow language of the Labor Relations Act, which in his opinion might be used against "unions that have as members the employees of more than one employer." But the very paragraph of the Railway Labor Act to which Mr. Mangold refers not only limits an election to the members of a single "craft" or "class," but also limits it to the employees of *one* carrier. And it is far more restrictive than the Labor Relations Act, which expressly provides that the term "employee" (as used throughout) shall "not be limited to the employees of a particular employer."

In The New Republic of July 31, Mr. Mangold alludes approvingly to a criticism of the National Labor Relations Act voiced by Robert W. Dunn. He argues that laws which forbid an employer to coerce employees to *join* a company union are "practically meaningless because employees do not ordinarily *join* a company union in the same way that a worker becomes a member of a trade union. The most usual procedure is for them to be 'included' or 'covered' by whatever representation scheme the company has set up for them." This criticism might well have been directed against Section 7a. But it has absolutely no applicability to the new law, which specifically prohibits the *practices* by which employers "set up" company unions, *e.g.,* financial assistance or interference with the formation or administration of so-called bargaining agencies, etc. . . .

ROBERT F. WAGNER.

Senate Office Bldg., Washington, D. C.

SIR: Senator Wagner is correct in pointing out that "craft unit" still remains in the National Labor Relations Act; my statement that it had been deleted was based on the text of the Act printed in The New York Times, which was in error. However, I do not believe that the inclusion of "craft unit" invalidates my main criticism—that the Act may be interpreted to restrict the bargaining unit to the employees of one employer. Section 9b, as enacted, provides that the Labor Board shall decide whether the unit appropriate for collective bargaining shall be the "employer unit, craft unit, plant unit, or any subdivision thereof." This, it seems to me, does not envision a bargaining unit that might include the employees of more than one employer, as is the practice in the coal industry, the clothing and garment trades, and so on, where collective-bargaining agreements are negotiated between industry-wide units of both employers and employees.

Senator Wagner declares that I am wrong in citing the Railway Labor Act as being broader in this respect. As amended in 1934, however, this act specifically provides the following:

> All disputes between a carrier or carriers and its or their employees shall be considered, and, if possible, decided with all expedition in conference between representatives designated and authorized so to confer, respectively, by the carrier or carriers and by the employees thereof interested in the dispute.

I can see no limitation in this confining bargaining to a single employer and his employees, as Senator Wagner asserts. The National Labor Relations Act would be stronger, I believe, if it contained a specific provision such as that quoted from the Railway Labor Act. The same thought may be implicit in the Wagner Act, but being implicit, it may be interpreted *out* by some board or court.

The fact that union representatives on the railroads are selected by craft or class units does not, in actual practice, restrict bargaining because (1) railroad workers are organized on a craft or class basis, and (2) such organization is considered horizontal—cutting across all carriers and including the employees of all. There is nothing artificial in this such as might result from the setting up of bargaining units under the National Labor Relations Act, confined to the employees of one employer. It is this sort of artificiality that may hamper the growth of strong unions on an industrial basis and leave the field open to company unions.

It is to be hoped, of course, that Senator Wagner is right in saying that the prohibitions in this law against the practices by which employers have controlled company unions will henceforth make it impossible for workers to be "included" or "covered" in a company-union plan against their will. Senator Wagner, however, has himself admitted that nothing in the measure "discourages employees from uniting on an independent or company-union basis." It remains to be seen how much use the employers can make of that.

W. P. MANGOLD.

New York City.

Help for Victims of the Nazis

SIR: The International Relief Association, a non-sectarian, non-partisan organization for the relief of victims of Nazi terror, is now organizing its first annual campaign. The appeals for aid are so urgent that we must raise at least $10,000 during the next year.

Thousands of German sufferers, families of those in concentration camps, look to the International Relief Association for help because they do not come within the range of activity of the various professional and racial relief agencies, admirable as their work may be. Moreover, the International Relief Association is providing food and shelter for hundreds of wives and children of the brave fighters killed in the uprising against Fascism in Austria in February, 1934. . . . We ask that checks be sent to the International Relief Association, 20 Vesey Street, New York City.

STERLING D. SPERO.

New York City.

Extracts from Letters

E. WILBUR KRIEBEL, on the Board of Trustees of Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, sends us a copy of resolutions adopted by the Board regarding the case of Dr. Winslow N. Hallett, who was recently dismissed from the faculty allegedly because of his liberal opinions and activities in the labor movement. The resolution of the Trustees says that "The failure to renew the contract of Dr. Winslow N. Hallett as a teacher did not involve any question of academic freedom nor his views with respect to capital and labor." Beyond that statement the Trustees give no further explanation of the dismissal. At the commencement exercises of the College on June 10, union workers, unemployed organizations and professional men picketed the entrance to the campus. According to a report sent us by Bill Reich, of Allentown, there was a lively scuffle with police until the picketers won the right to parade. At the conclusion of the commencement exercises, Dr. Hallett, who had sat with the faculty, joined the picketers while still wearing his academic cap and gown.

The Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor sends notice of the Seventh Pan-American Child Congress to be held in Mexico City, October 12 to 19. All the governments in the Pan-American Union have been invited to attend the Congress, which will take up the subject of child welfare in all its phases.

John A. Weaver, secretary of the Committee Against Discriminatory Practices in the City Colleges, writes to say that the address of the committee was incorrectly published in a recent issue of The New Republic. It is 409 West One Hundred and Forty-first Street, New York City.

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Ellen Glasgow's New Book

Vein of Iron, by Ellen Glasgow. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

AT ITS core this last is, of all Miss Glasgow's novels, the most profound and serene. Compared, for instance, to "The Sheltered Life," it is rather less open and fluent and more channeled and intense. As a whole, in fact, its line is as final and distinct as a myth-form or a legend. The theme of the book is implicit in the title. If I should ask the author what that theme is, she would, doubtless, be likely to say that it is best brought out in a question: What is it that has enabled human beings to endure life on the earth? One after another in "Vein of Iron" she has considered and interpreted these answers. Religion? Philosophy? Love? Simple human relationships? Or merely the character that is fortitude? What is the vein of iron that has enabled not only families, but races, nations, strains, to survive and even to forge, or weave, some continuing tradition?

In this novel the vein of iron is, immediately, the Scottish strain of fortitude that has come down from the earliest pioneers in the valley (the roots of the story derive from the Great Valley of Virginia, not the familiar Tidewater region of Miss Glasgow's previous work). But though the iron vein—that fortitude and character in the blood of these Scotch Presbyterian pioneers—is thus close at hand for us, the basic theme of the novel is something far less confined to any locality and far less limited to any racial temperament. By some chemistry of thought in the writer, these elements of predestination and courage in a harsh creed spread into a passion for finality and life. The motif of, for example, death is thereby magnificently employed. Of the chief characters we see one after another the three oldest die, the three deaths separate and varied in physical and spiritual detail. Each occasion is made to bear on the central theme of the book, and to express, also, the character of the person in both its earthly and its timeless aspect. This is accomplished with no sentimentality or softness; life remains life, death, death, and the scene that belongs to it is bitter, salty and exalted.

Among the technical maturities in "Vein of Iron," we are struck, so far as the writing itself goes, by the variations in rhythm for retrospection, for narrative, for dialogue and for each individual. A good illustration of this will be found in the scene where the five characters are seated before the fire in the manse, and in those five different reflections, or streams of consciousness, appear varying cadences, from the long, slow rhythm of age to the aimless short staccato of the child.

> . . . Weaving in and out of her body and soul, knitting her into the past as she knitted life into stockings, moved the familiar rhythms and pauses—now—of the house and moved as a casual wave, as barely a minute's ebbing and flow, in the timeless surge of predestination.
>
> "Grandmother's nodding. She dropped off. She's beginning to snore," Ada whispered triumphantly.

The story of it is modern, but "Vein of Iron" covers the whole way of these valley people. By means of retrospection, recollection, sharp images retained, half-lost memories sprung forward into the mind or nerves, each step of the past is linked with the long line before and afterwards. Out of this whole the characters shown us proceed exactly. From this whole they possess, beneath their separate variety, a oneness both narrow and universal. This is true of old Grandmother Fincastle, reaching farther back into pioneer days, and of her son John. It is true of Ada and Ralph, the young couple whose story we follow through their early hopes and joys and ill fortunes, the World War, the time afterward with its new kind of harshness and struggle, their return to the Valley, and on to the book's concluding note of the deathless perfection at the center of their lives.

In "John Fincastle" the author thinks of the fate of the scholar in America, of the thinker among the dynamos. In "The Dying Age," she is concerned with our very special form of disintegration. Amid these scenes of fading outlines, material and spiritual, Miss Glasgow creates echoes from the past and from within, giving them the force and distinctness of ultimate character patterns. And her motif of the return of each character, at the most intense and searching points of its existence, to the generation not next its own but farther back—for example, the girl's tragic thought reverts not to her father or mother, but to Grandmother Fincastle—is a brilliant case of intuition.

The old grandmother sitting alone, brooding over the trouble that has come to the daughter of the house, feels a sudden vertigo rush over her, as if the room were all menacing and alive. To keep from falling out of the chair, she clutches the edge of the table, and looks up, startled, astonished and incredulous. In front of her yawns the bottomless pit, outside and beyond the infinite mercy. Then just as the room and the earth were about to give way under her, she says aloud: "The Lord has never failed me. I am in the hands of the Lord."

John Fincastle, the thinker, turned out by the church, praised by scholars abroad, has got by that year of grace 1925 a place to teach in a finishing school. As he descends the steps he pushes onward through a thicket of flaxen legs and blank flowerlike faces. Not until he is past the rosy knees and the red mockery of the lips does he pause to draw breath amid the purring of ceaseless dynamos. He can never escape from that ceaseless vibration, which seems to him the pulse and soul of the machine. He has resolved that he will earn his keep as long as his strength holds out and pay the premiums as they fall due on what is left of his insurance. The young? Will the young always and everywhere confuse change with progress? It seems to him that his generation held, however loosely, to some standard of living. Nobility of motive had not then become a lost issue. The world then as now was inhospitable to the lover of wisdom, but it has remained for the age of invention to make him an outcast.

While the chant peals through old woman's mind, equilibrium is restored, faith balances itself on its throne, a fresh infusion of energy surges through her veins, and she feels her withered heart put on greenness. John Fincastle will earn his keep as long as he can; and, after that, when the infirmities of age overtake him, there will still be the good end ahead. For, whatever else he has missed in life, the good end he can never miss.

The indestructible will of the world is toward life. The line of this novel's legend is superb. STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Class Enemy

YES, THANK you, our Russian neighbors are doing quite well. All their industrial ventures seem to be zooming ahead at an even rate, their farms are yielding as never before, and even their decrepit railways are being kicked and prodded into delivering freight almost on time. Wages are going up a little and prices are going down still more. With some of their major problems out of the way, Soviet leaders are turning their attention to minor products —flower beds, jazz bands, joy, light wines and the secret ballot. But meanwhile one Russian product is being manufactured at a rate never contemplated in the second Five Year Plan. That product consists in books, pamphlets and magazine articles calculated to prove that the whole Russian experiment is a failure, that the country is one vast asylum for the criminally insane and that its people have no amusement except starving to death.

I should judge that there are two principal reasons for the contrast between the bright news from Russia and the gloomy picture presented in anti-Russian literature. One is that the Soviets change quickly, whereas books take a long time to write. All the horror stories now being published are stories of the past: they deal with adventures or imaginary adventures that belong to the years from 1928 to 1932, when the first Five Year Plan was being carried as if by frontal assault and spies and wreckers were skulking in the rear. That was a heroic period in Russia, but it was not pretty, not pleasant, and the darker side of it is now being described at length.

There is, however, another reason for the flood of anti-Soviet books, and one that is much less creditable to their authors. The fortunes of the Soviets are interlocked with those of labor movements in the western world. It is no use trying to keep them separate; it is no use pointing out the obvious fact that building socialism in a primitive and bankrupt country like Russia after the War is quite a different problem from building socialism in highly industrialized countries like Germany and the United States. Messrs. Hitler, Hearst and their allies are too simple-minded to appreciate this distinction. They know that the failure of Russian communism would defeat even the mildly progressive movements in the West, or at the very least would set them back for fifty years. They also know that any triumph of the Soviets is an argument for union labor, for social security, for higher taxes on millionaires. Accordingly, the present period of prosperity in Russia drives them into frantic encouragement of any books that make prosperity there seem impossible. Liars are paid by them at the best space rates. Old manuscripts are taken out of trunks, dusted off, peppered with atrocities and published as the latest news from Moscow: "Extra! Extra!"

"Prisoner of the Ogpu"[1] is probably not the best of the anti-Soviet memoirs, but it is published at a strategic moment and the author tells his story with cold, effective hatred. In 1928 George Kitchin was arrested by the Russian political police. He says over and over that he was absolutely innocent in mind and deed, and so perhaps he was. In that case, however, he must have been innocent to the point of folly. Any man who went to Russia hoping to make a fortune through buying cheap and selling dear—any man who tried to corner the supply of church oil and candles, who didn't bother to conceal his hatred for the Soviets, who hung around the British and the Finnish consulates in Leningrad at a time when these were known as centers for espionage—any man who did all this and still expected to be sent home to Finland with love and kisses and a bushel-basketful of Moscow gold, should have been examined by a committee of alienists. But the Soviets were too busy to fool with alienists. They held Kitchin in jail for sixteen months, gave him a twenty-minute trial and sentenced him to four years' imprisonment, counting from the day of his arrest.

The last two years of his sentence were spent in the convict camps of the far north. Beginning with his arrival at the Kotlas Transfer Station early in December, 1929, he underwent four months of pure torture, the result of intense cold, insufficient clothing, unheated barracks, lice, scanty rations, long hours of work and cruel discipline. But the Soviets needed trained men in the North as everywhere else. In March, 1930, Kitchin was transferred to office work and was given a fairly comfortable lodging. His position enabled him to uncover all sorts of brutality and inefficiency, and gave him material for anti-Soviet jokes to swap with his companions. In February, 1932, he was released and crossed the border into Finland.

I should judge on the strength of internal evidence—the only evidence available—that there is a good deal of exaggeration in his story. Like the people who wrote atrocity books about the War, he seems to have collected anecdotes from all possible sources. His figures in regard to the death rate in the prison camps are about as much to be trusted as those of the war veteran who claims to be the only survivor of his platoon, company or battalion. But I can see no reason for doubting the general outlines of his narrative. The prison camps of 1930-32 were a disgrace to the Russian system; they showed what is likely to happen when inefficiency and haste and zeal are mingled on a huge scale, and when the effects of this mixture are aggravated by prison self-government—that is, the system by which officials convicted of graft or drunkenness or cruelty in the Ukraine were sent into the North and given another chance. Many of them continued to be drunken and cruel grafters, until they were caught again and liquidated forever. The whole episode is ugly, and it has to be faced by friends of the Soviet Union. Kitchin probably tells the truth about it, within the narrow limits set by his hatred.

But there are many truths about Russia, and he tells only one. It is also the truth that during the four years when he suffered and complained in prison, the whole nation was suffering, and complaining little, and giving birth to a new society. Russia was fighting another revolution, as broad and deep in its effects as the revolution of 1917. A period like this can be judged either from the future that is being created or the past that is dying. Kitchin belongs to the past; he and his whole class were resisting the Five Year Plan, were hoping for its failure, were destroyed by its success. Thus, the truth he gives us is of a special sort: it is the truth about spraying apple orchards as written from the point of view of the woolly aphis and the coddling moth.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

[1] Prisoner of the Ogpu, by George Kitchin. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 345 pages. $3.

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Clarence Day

Life with Father, by Clarence Day. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 258 pages. $2.

NEARLY twenty years ago, when I made Clarence Day's acquaintance, his rheumatism wasn't much more than fifteen years old, and once in a while he could still dine out. Even then, though, he was pretty lame, and when we went in to dinner something had to be done to make it possible for him to sit at the table. Not much, but it had to be done accurately. He had to take charge. His directions were clear, brief and few. Once he was properly seated, he forgot his lameness and kept the rest of us from remembering it. His way of taking it was impersonal, as though it were an external object. He paid it as much attention as it needed, not more, not less, and that was that.

Though these dinners were small, and most of the guests his old friends, he didn't say a great deal. Yet I don't believe he often struck people, whether old friends or newcomers, as unwilling to talk his share. Some otherwise quite decent listeners behave as if they had taken their ply long ago, put silence on like a shirt which must never be changed. Clarence Day was silent because he happened to be hearing things that happened to interest him. Shy he might be, but his silence did not come from this cause. He seemed attentive, slightly expectant. The little he did say, whether it was caricatural or witty or gaily exclamatory, was apt. It helped the talk forward. People were glad they'd said whatever it was that made him say what he said. Two other things I remember as likely to catch a newcomer's notice. Just under the top skin his color changed quickly, like an excitable man's. And though I knew, having been told, that he would never get better, I kept on expecting him to be entirely well the next time we met.

The key to such an expectation is this: though Clarence Day has had to live like an invalid, on his body's account, since about 1900, he has now and always did have the point of view and the interests of a man in perfect health. Even today, whenever I go to see him, though I can tell city from country, outdoors from indoors, it would not surprise me to find him beside a lively brook, propped against a tree trunk. The place where you do find him has a view that is nearly all trees, rocks, grass and sky. The high couch where he enjoys life is parallel to the wall of his sitting room, a few feet from windows looking north over Central Park.

When you come in he doesn't turn his head, doesn't usually say anything till you are at the foot of his couch, in the field of his straight-ahead vision. His gaze bids you welcome. His smile assumes that your arrival is among other things a joke shared between him and you. His first words are never a greeting. They wipe out the interval between this visit and the one before. They take up an interrupted talk, continue an unfinished letter. Sometimes he waits—I can never guess the proportion of intentional to unconscious in these waitings—till he's found out whether this time you have anything on your chest that you want to get rid of. Something you say, something odd in your get-up, may touch him off into an extravagant burlesque, improvised, never thought of before, new as the moment. Or he may take fewer words to be himself in. After the talk has been going on for a while, and his mind begins to play with a subject—Maeterlinck, for example, if you have brought him in—Clarence may foretell with detail what will happen to Maeterlinck "the next time he offers us any more mail-order lessons in sweetness." Actually these words are from "The Crow's Nest," but they might just as likely have been a scrap of his talk.

Once he wrote an article, "The Revolt of Capital." This too may be found in "The Crow's Nest," and it puts us into a world where the sway of labor has long been absolute. Labor chooses all boards of directors, occupies all the executive offices. Labor is shocked when capital denounces this practice as one-sided, dumbfounded by capital's cry that directors ought to be chosen by stockholders. How, labor asks, "how could scattered investors, who never worked at an industry, elect—with any intelligence—the managers of it?" Such reversals and parodies keep springing up in Clarence Day's talk. They throw light in many directions. Even his purest nonsense may prove, when you consider it later, not quite pure. It may be changing your mind. Not that he means it that way. He never gives a lesson. And never advice, till you ask for it.

All sorts and conditions of men go to see Clarence. Some of them do for him what English sailors returning after long voyages did for the Elizabethan poets they found in London taverns. Travelers tell him their tales. Travelers returning from the less known and queerer regions of business, of journalism and society and sport, from out-of-the-way parts of the geographical world. Once I referred to the difficulty of eating a quail a day for thirty days. Clarence said that after the fortieth or forty-fifth day the diet grew easier. An explorer, whose name I forget, had told him so, a man who'd been forced to make the experiment. To have such bits of knowledge on hand, and to find them when they count, is characteristic of Clarence. His curiosity is hospitable, more hospitable than active, his gullibility somewhere near zero. To tell him things that aren't so is a waste of time. But he has no skeptical attitude. His skepticism picks and chooses its moment.

Out-of-the-way information, provided it betters the hearer's acquaintance with this world—such, I imagine, is the talk that Clarence finds most nourishing. If you can't bring him anything of this kind, it doesn't matter. Any human doings or sayings that illustrate character, by people you both know, by people he doesn't know, any oddity you have caught yourself at, such things will serve. But you had better not offer them with condescension or acidity or moral judgments. His assumption is that we are all absurd, occasionally grotesque, each in his own way. To feel superior to any man, merely because we see his brand of absurdity more clearly than he can, is a stupid brand of absurdity. Though Clarence does not himself go in for handing down moral judgments, his color rises fast against some varieties of selfishness, against injustice and treachery, rises quickest against cruelty. He has the gift of sudden passionate anger. But in general he has no impulse to divide conduct into right and wrong or to think of the tribes as either friendly or hostile. The more interesting truth is mostly hidden from observers who resort habitually to these classifications. Human nature is worth a closer inspection.

Clarence Day is a close inspector. He gets a lot of fun out of understanding things. Truth is the quarry he hunts with such zest. Or—in case he should read this—he would detest the word "truth" as too tall; suppose I tone it down into saying that what he is after is always a likeness? In his writing even wit, an uncommon office for wit to fill, often delineates character; just as his laughter, being a humorist's, is also a designer's, a composer's, a builder's. No humorist I can think of is at once so unsentimental and good-natured and hard-headed. There is hard-headedness

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in his wisdom, cordiality, sympathy and affection, all of which color and deepen his feeling toward the world of men and women. Both the books the Book of the Month Club is sending to its subscribers—the older "God and My Father" and the new "Life with Father"—make us better acquainted with this feeling. They give life back to his parents, her beauty and youth back to his mother. They are acts of piety, and no other act of piety resembles them. They are done with affection and gusto, with here and there a touch of lovely, unsweetened tenderness, always with kind, unflinching eyes and the friendliest laughter. And while we read we also laugh, often uncontrollably, in outbursts. For these are two of the funniest books written in our time, and written in a prose whose ease is deceptive. It is written for the ear, it sounds like the best talk, it has a casual air, its nonchalance invites you to ignore the subtlety of its cadences. Delightful books they are, these two, books you like as though they were alive, books that are alive with energy and collisions and the running water of happiness.

In a book about the writer's own people there is always a risk that we may not see them quite as he sees them. The only part of "Life with Father" where I dissent from the author's view is the chapter called "Father Interferes with the Twenty-third Psalm." Here Clarence Day tells us how he felt as a small boy about the Bible in French. Among the French words that upset him and made him laugh was *"irrité"* where the English Bible says "wroth." Instead of the Lord being wroth, *le Seigneur* was *irrité*. The patriarchs were *irrités* when they ought to have been wroth. This was unsatisfactory. It lowered the patriarchs. It reduced their stature. "If they were full of mere irritation all the time," Clarence Day felt, "they were more like the Day family." I don't feel that way at all. What "Life with Father" shows us is not irritation. Nearly every chapter in the book does, I admit, lead us up to and into and then away from an outburst of temper. It is from explosion to explosion that the story moves on its quiet feet. Life in the Day family was a series of detonations. Mr. Day lost his temper often and tremendously. But he was not irritated. Men several sizes smaller, thin-lipped ungenial men, they are the ones who get irritated. Mr. Day was wroth.

PHILIP LITTELL.

A Garland of Posies

Historic Opinions of the United States Supreme Court, with a Preface and Introductory Notes by Ambrose Doskow. New York: The Vanguard Press. 558 pages. $4.50.

A COLLECTION of the *causes célèbres* decided by the Supreme Court during the span of its history has something portentous in it. Not only does it convey, through the series of vexed and bitter cases, the terrific impact of the Court's power in the past: it seems also the shadow that is being cast before, by the coming decisions of the next year or two. For whether we like it or not, we shall all be living for some time in the shadow of the Court's power. Whatever Mr. Roosevelt finally determines in his heads-or-tails vacillation as to whether he will make constitutional reform the supreme issue of the campaign, the Court none the less embodies the real urgency of the immediate future. We must decide, and decide soon, whether we shall regard judicial supremacy primarily as an obstruction or a safeguard to American life. And the decision will have to be made, not by skilled jurists or subtle statesmen, but by the ballots of people whose knowledge of constitutional law is restricted to the Hearst and Saturday Evening Post editorials, who think in terms of sanctities and villainies, whose association with Marshall is that he advocated a good five-cent cigar, and whose guess about a Federalist is that he must be a species of G-man.

It is to these lords of the ballot that Mr. Doskow presumably addresses his selection of cases. For the lawyer and the student of politics there are of course casebooks aplenty on constitutional law, and much more thoroughgoing than this one. But Mr. Doskow has made a valiant attempt to bring constitutional law out of the technical atmosphere of the class-room. To this end he has selected sixteen cases, running from Marbury v. Madison in 1801 to the Schechter case decided a few months ago, and printed the Court opinions in full and in many instances the dissenting opinions as well. Among them are four opinions from Marshall's magistral pen, with their juggernaut advance from unexamined premises to unshakable conclusions; Taney's weird Dred Scott opinion; the thoughtful opinions by Miller (in the Slaughterhouse cases) and by Waite (in Munn v. Illinois), with the lingering unreality attaching to them of something that might have been a good idea if it had been followed up; Field's militant dissent in the Munn case, becoming Court doctrine in the dull but dogged ukases of Peckham (Lochner case), Day (Hammer v. Dagenhart child-labor case), and Sutherland (Adkins minimum-wage case); the brief dissents of Holmes in all three of these cases, with their deadly effectiveness, each time hitting the jugular vein; Brandeis' treatise on the ice industry and economic planning, cast in the form of a dissent in the Liebmann case; McReynolds' dissent in the gold-clause case, reading like an editorial jeremiad in The Commercial and Financial Chronicle; Hughes's opinions in that case and in the Minnesota moratorium case; his very different opinion in the Schechter case, along with Cardozo's concurring opinion—the first rigorous, legalistic, austere, the second sensitive with the icy sensitiveness of a finely tempered steel blade, narrow and sharp.

This is an anthology of the judicial power—a garland of posies tossed in the faces of those who believe in the promise of American life. It contains presumably the flower and flowering of our judicial talent. Much of it is dreary and stale, resembling college essays on the Constitution; some of it rises to the stature of statesmanship and even of literature; in all of it there is a kind of broken poetry, not so much resident in the opinions themselves as in their nexus with the meteoric career of business enterprise on this continent, the tremendous force of ideas, the daily lives and fates of common men.

What can the reading of these cases do for the common man, or even for the moderately intelligent man who is not a student of law? He may only get, as with most anthologies of any sort, a fleeting sense of contact with the choice and the historic. He may find in these opinions an armory to defend his prejudices or a graveyard for his hopes. But from so small a selection of cases he will come away without any real sense of the development of the Court. Despite Mr. Doskow's excellent introductory notes, it is impossible to convey through sixteen cases the driving forces behind the judicial power.

I know that any useful casebook or anthology must be built on a plurality of criteria, and I know it is carping to quarrel with an editor's selections, especially in a field where judicial traditions, economic development, idea currents and governmental power flow together in confusion. But my emphasis is not mainly on the omissions. It is that no clear patterns of analysis emerge from the book. I wish

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that the editor had used his abilities on a book built on the basic lines of development of the judicial power in its dynamic economic setting. This would have required giving many more cases, giving long extracts from the opinions rather than the opinions in full, and expanding the editor's own notes. As it stands, the book is a useful collection of some of the more important opinions. It should go well as a companion volume to Professor Corwin's "Twilight of the Supreme Court," which, despite the ironic twist that recent events have given its title and main thesis, is still the best history and analysis of our judicial doctrines.

MAX LERNER.

The Two Inch Shelf of Books

An Anthology of World Prose. Edited by Carl Van Doren. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. 1,608 pages. $3.50.

THE GREAT legitimate use of collections of this order—prose flowers from sixteen languages, some four thousand years, perhaps a hundred cultures, and almost as many frames of mind as there are authors represented—can hardly be served in any published example, any example directed toward others, toward any public, whether educated, anxious or ignorant. The great purpose is private to the anthologist: to give himself in ready form reminders for meditation from texts he has already mastered. Once made, such an anthology might show the growth of a taste, the structure of an education and the affinities of a particular spirit. Montaigne's kitchen, with its mottoes and aphorisms and insights copied on the rafters and the walls, gives us the bare bones of one extreme; and Southey's "Commonplace Book," a stuffed attic of all ages, gives us the weaker flesh of the other.

The present compendium—or any other like it—is intended to work the other way round: to shape taste with fragments, to educate out of confusion, and to create affinities for every spirit alike; and this it cannot do, since its readers—the department, stationery and drug-store public—will neither have chosen nor mastered the texts. Other classes of readers—those with the narrowness of knowledge and the scruple of specific interest—will hardly touch the book in any case; they will know it at once for what it is, by its title, by the claims of the publisher on the jacket and the pretensions of Mr. Van Doren in his preface, that it is only a pill for culture, large but not hard to swallow, and of no value whatever. There is a more learned word than pill, harder to say, but, once said, more satisfactory because more accurate and suggesting at once new applications. This anthology is a succedaneum—a substitute thing or person to fall back on in default of another—and a false one at that. The world is full of succedanea and half our life is achieved vicariously if at all; but in our knowledge, our wisdom, our apprehension of the arts, the vicarious of any sort is intolerable because unnecessary. If we have room for the arts at all (which I know many have not) it is because we have no room for the makeshift, the guidebook, the excursion—because we never have room for fifteen minutes a day.

Mr. Van Doren has. It is the fifteen-minute mind that composed this anthology, as it was a five-foot mind that composed Dr. Eliot's Classics; a comparison of incompatibles equally displeasing. This volume is addressed, says Mr. Van Doren, to "readers interested in literature at large." He was guided in his choice of foreign works "less by the renown of the originals than by the merit of the translations," and of all the works by a search for "writers who here and now speak with the universal authority of timeless words." Such are the aspirations; they give themselves away by saying too much. No *serious* mind conceives timeless words in terms of an interest at large; only the solemn mind is capable of that—and the solemn is the last form of the frivolous.

Bearing this in mind, consider the selection of recent Americans and, say, the selection of English philosophers. We have of philosophers proper only Bacon and Hume. Of recent Americans we have among others Dreiser, Cabell, Lewis and Wolfe. It is as hard to think of these as writing timeless words as it is not to miss, with Bacon and Hume, Berkeley and Bradley. However you look at it, from the evidence presented only a frivolous judgment can issue. Which is to demean neither Hume nor Wolfe, but Mr. Van Doren's notion of his task.

R. P. BLACKMUR.

Mantic Almageste

Transition: An International Workshop for Vertigralist Transmutation. July, 1935. No. 23. Edited by Eugene Jolas. The Hague: The Servire Press. 205 pages. Fr. 3.50.

IN THIS number of Transition Stuart Gilbert writes on Algernon Blackwood, describing one of his stories thus:

> In a lonely house in the Pontwaun Mountains of Wales four people . . . participate in a unique experiment: an effort to find and formulate the Great Names whose utterance makes men like gods.

Many more than four people are involved in the search for the Word Ineffable under the sponsorship of the present Transition. It is something to see in process, too, especially if you have taken note of the earlier stages of the pilgrimage, when the little nucleus of the Transition group still retained some lingering urge to try to understand the transition being worked out in the unideal world of capitalist disintegration; in other words, before the phonetic anesthesia had become complete.

That time has gone forever, and now Transition sits hushed in spelled communion with Boehme and Novalis, at intervals murmuring with mystic passion Words which, any one of them, if rightly intoned, may reveal to its enunciator the power, the beauty and the glory of that bright mysterious World of the Ideal, "of which this vegetable world," Joyce said once with laughter, "is but a shadow." There are *paramyths* in Transition, and a little *mantic almageste, hypnologues* and *transmutation vertigraliste,* and more of Joyce's "Work in Progress," which now has reached the stage of carrying music and diagrams in its margins. A hostile comment on page 148 is to the effect that social change is the matrix of changes in language, and that no transubstantiation in men or their world is achievable by phonetics; but one doubts that this douching will startle into the open any of the initiates who sit huddled windwhispering raptly on the margin of the Ineffable in Transition's allentombing womb of words.

MURRAY GODWIN.

P.S. A supplement entitled "Testimony Against Gertrude Stein," Transition pamphlet No. 1, seems to show that the Jolases, Matisse, Tzara and others, in their relations with Gertrude the Inertrude, were more sinned against than sinning. Does that interest anybody? M. G.

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Sweet Story

Lucy Gayheart, by Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

THE CHARGE of thinness or insubstantiality is one that could long ago have been urged against the fiction of Willa Cather at its least distinguished, but until "Lucy Gayheart" appeared it would not have seemed quite just to tax it with sheer banality. Almost the only interest "Lucy Gayheart" has is the melancholy interest it derives from showing that Willa Cather can be almost unrelievedly commonplace. It would not be quite literal to say that any one of twenty or thirty American writers of the last two generations, especially women writers, could have written this identical novel; but its materials are as standardized and its ethical implications as conventional as such a remark would indicate.

A brightly animated young girl from a small Nebraska town studying music in Chicago (Lucy); a romantically disappointed middle-aged singer, a distinguished and fastidious person, who draws her to him (Sebastian); an aggressive but kind-hearted young banker who wants to make Lucy his wife but throws her over because he suspects a real liaison between her and Sebastian; the death of both Sebastian and Lucy by drowning, the one in Italy, the other in Nebraska; the long penance of Gordon, who might have saved Lucy—this is the substance of a novel to which only a miracle could have imparted freshness or force. Personal distinction, the fine artistic temperament, sensibility and elegance are at a discount in a dull, barbarous and malignant world; they struggle briefly, but they are carried under, and they survive only as exquisite ghosts in the memory of the appreciative: this is what the fable only too evidently enforces.

It is a moral that, with qualifications, was once worth enforcing, and when Willa Cather wrote "Paul's Case" or "A Lost Lady," one felt that the prevailing ikons, to which even men of letters said their prayers, were being quietly flouted. It was much that a gifted writer, at that time, should tacitly repudiate the philistine values that many of her fellow writers accepted and propagated. But the repudiation was always strongly temperamental; there was a minimum of critical thought behind it; and it has long been clear that Willa Cather is incapable of seeing the predicament of the superior individual or the artist in anything but a softly reflected and sentimental light. Her imagination takes in the individual instance, the specific wrong; but it has a terribly narrow reach, and is helpless in the presence of large historical forces. In personal terms she has disliked some of the morals of her class, but she has never dreamed of challenging them fundamentally, and as a result her celebration of the Lucy Gayhearts and the Clement Sebastians has become merely the reverse of a cultivated superciliousness toward the rest of mankind.

Sebastian himself betrays this interestingly in a remark he makes to Lucy about his worldly and self-seeking accompanist, Mockford. After we have been told that nothing ever came near Sebastian "to tarnish his personal elegance," so that he must use silver toilet articles and have rose-colored blankets on his bed, it is somewhat disagreeable to hear him say: "Jimmy is rather brassy at times—fault of his early training. He came out of the slums, really." The coarseness of which self-styled aristocrats are capable is no novelty to the observant eye or ear, but this speech accounts, almost by itself, not only for the tenuity but for the triteness of "Lucy Gayheart." NEWTON ARVIN.

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Novels in Brief

They Shoot Horses, Don't They? by Horace McCoy. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.

THE DANCE marathon contest was held on the amusement pier at Santa Monica in an enormous old firetrap built out over the ocean on pilings. Beneath the floor, beneath their aching feet, the contestants felt the Pacific pounding night and day. For ten minutes each afternoon a triangle of sunshine came through a window and lighted one spot on the floor. "I," Robert Syverten, hoped he would always live in the sunlight if he ever got out of this madhouse, this insane merry-go-round which provided free food and free bed while you lasted, a thousand dollars if you won. Once he caught a whiff of fresh air from the ocean. His partner, Gloria Beatty, repeated, "More and more and more I wish I was dead." The loudspeakers blared all day; at night the Hollywood crowd jammed in. Rocky Gravo was knifed for sneaking a girl under the platform, one guy was blackjacked, many fainted, the master of ceremonies proclaimed "A little sprint, kids," until you lost count of the hours, days, nights, weeks.—But why must "I," Robert Syverten, remember these things while a judge is pronouncing sentence on the "murderer" of Gloria Beatty?—The book is a deliberate shocker, and just escapes being a parody of Mr. Cain's "Postman": it is sordid, pathetic, senselessly exciting. It will be read, however. It has the immediacy—and the significance—of a nerve-shattering explosion. R. M.

Honor Come Back, by Naomi Jacob. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

As the reader will guess from the obvious symbolism of this novel's jacket design—a sword superimposed upon a plow—it has to do with war and peace; and while Miss Jacob has tried hard to inscribe a terrific indictment of the old British custom that forces soldiers' sons to become soldiers, even though they may prefer farming, her choice of Fascist Italy as a sanctuary for peace-loving Michael Benham provides a somewhat incongruous ending. Michael went to war at fifteen, lying about his age, because his father, one of those mustachioed old war horses who loved to overhear people call him "one of the fighting Benhams," believed the boy to be a coward. After three years, during which the sensitive youth came to believe that he was immune to death, that he must live to see others suffer, he deserted a few days before the Armistice and wandered through Italy as a beggar until, sick and starved, he was taken in hand by a prosperous Italian family. When his mother found him, years later, he refused to return to England and his inheritance. L. B.

Solomon, My Son, by John Erskine. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

By this time readers of John Erskine's novels should be aware that he knows pretty thoroughly what Shaw knows, what Cabell knows—in fact, What Every Woman Knows. The lives of all great men and storied heroes have been reminding him for nearly a decade that some woman pulled the strings and the moronic male puppet was jerked into fame and greatness. The victim, at the moment, is Solomon, shorn of his fabulously numbered wives, his wisdom and even his "Song of Songs"—which he cribbed from a shepherd ballad. Solomon was not even the ancestor of Haile Selassie, according to this comedy version. The story is a

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stenciled one, but the stencil was cut with more neatness and wit than John Erskine has used since his very first novel. K. W.

A London Story, by George Buchanan. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

This is the story of two brothers—of how John, the success-seeker, loses everything through marriage to a cold and ambitious woman; and of how Nicholas, who doubts the worth of material success, finds happiness in a humble job and a fine, spiritual girl. Mr. Buchanan tells his fable of an English middle-class group in strangely stilted, unmoving prose; his characters are clothes-horses seemingly devised to carry the message summed up in Nicholas' words: "If everyone suddenly doubted, we'd have a bloodless revolution in a day." C. B.

Enbury Heath, by Stella Gibbons. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

The early life of the three Garden children had been miserable and ugly. When their parents died, leaving some two thousand pounds, Sophia, who was twenty-one and wrote poetry, believed that if they rented the dear little cottage on Enbury Heath she and her two charmingly irresponsible brothers would lead "orderly" lives. For a month they did, despite the constant interference of all the aunts and uncles who took such an annoying and disapproving interest in them. But when gin was introduced to the cottage, order fled from it. This is one of those sprightly tales of the complexities and pettinesses of family life which the English can tell so much better than any other people. But it is more than that, for Miss Gibbons has a gift for characterization and a habit of making words behave just the way she wants them to. G. A.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford is the London correspondent for The New Republic.

Dayton D. McKean is a member of the faculty of Princeton University and is also a member of the New Jersey Legislature.

Theodore Roethke, a native of Saginaw, Michigan, was educated at Michigan and Harvard Universities and for the past four years has been an instructor in English at Lafayette College.

Harold Ward, whose special field is the sciences and their social implications, has contributed articles and book reviews to various magazines.

Stephen Spender is one of the leading figures, along with Auden and Day-Lewis, in the recent poetic renaissance in England. His volume, "Poems," was published last year by Random House.

Philip Littell, who was one of the first group of editors of The New Republic, has contributed extensively to magazines and has written several books, including "Books and Things," a volume of essays, and "This Way Out," a satirical novel of the Garden of Eden.

Max Lerner recently was appointed lecturer in Government at Harvard University and this summer served as chairman of the faculty of the Wellesley Summer Institute for Social Progress.

R. P. Blackmur is a former editor of Hound and Horn and has written verse and literary criticism for that and other magazines.

Murray Godwin is a free-lance writer living in New York City who has contributed articles and book reviews to various magazines.

Newton Arvin is associate professor of English at Smith College and author of a biography of Hawthorne.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Robert Mullen, Lawrence Bell, Kenneth White, Carlton Brown and Grace Adams.

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